

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 1303-S2

May 20, 1997

To the Honorable Speaker and Members,

The House of Representatives of the State of Washington
Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am returning herewith, without my approval as to sections 4, 7, 10, 20 and 21, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1303 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to education;"

Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1303 authorizes school districts' boards of directors to grant to individual schools within their districts full or partial waivers of specified laws and rules relating to education. This authorization provides greater flexibility to locally elected officials and enables principals to propose what is best for the children in their schools. Because the authorization is granted only until June 30, 1999, and because the legislation requires the Superintendent of Public Instruction to study the effect of the waivers, it is clear the Legislature intended this legislation to be an *experiment* in greater local authority and flexibility.

Section 4 would allow the waiver of statutes that protect the educational rights of students with disabilities, section 7 would allow the waiver of statutes that protect bilingual students, section 10 would allow waiver of the state wide truancy standards, section 20 would allow waiver of statutes that protect sexual equality, and section 21 amends the statute regarding probationary periods for certificated school employees. I believe there is sufficient new authority and flexibility in this bill regarding other parts of education law to enable a meaningful "experiment in greater local authority and flexibility" without the inclusion of these statutes designed to protect special populations of students.

The state wide truancy standards were part of the "Becca Bill" and are just beginning to have an effect. It would be inappropriate to allow them to be waived so soon. Except for the expiration date, section 21 is identical to provisions in SB 5340 which I have already approved.

For these reasons, I have vetoed sections 4, 7, 10, 20 and 21 of Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill No. 1303.

With the exception of sections 4, 7, 10, 20, and 21, Engrossed Second Substitute House Bill 1303 is approved.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor