

VETO MESSAGE ON HB 2330-S

March 12, 1998

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, Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2330 entitled:

"AN ACT Relating to church schools;"

This legislation creates and defines a new category of private schools, "religiously affiliated exempt schools," and would exempt these schools from all current requirements except that their physical facilities would have to meet health and fire safety standards.

The paramount duty of the state of Washington is to provide for the education of all children in our state. Current law sets forth the very minimum state controls necessary to ensure the health and safety of students, and requires that a sufficient basic education is delivered by private schools.

I am sympathetic to the issues raised by proponents of ESHB 2330 regarding certification requirements for private school teachers, and I am willing to support exempting teachers at religiously affiliated schools from those requirements. My staff will be available to work with those groups during the interim to develop legislation that both adequately addresses that issue and satisfies my concerns.

If ESHB 2330 were to become law, the state could not meet its minimum obligation to ensure that all children receive a sufficient basic education.

For these reasons, I have vetoed Engrossed Substitute House Bill No. 2330 in its entirety.

Respectfully submitted,
Gary Locke
Governor