

## ALEC EXPOSED

"ALEC" has long been a secretive collaboration between Big Business and "conservative" politicians. Behind closed doors, they ghostwrite "model" bills to be introduced in state capitols across the country. This agenda—underwritten by global corporations—includes major tax loopholes for big industries and the super rich, proposals to offshore U.S. jobs and gut minimum wage, and efforts to weaken public health, safety, and environmental protections. Although many of these bills have become law, until now, their origin has been largely unknown. With **ALEC EXPOSED**, the Center for Media and Democracy hopes more Americans will study the bills to understand the depth and breadth of how big corporations are changing the legal rules and undermining democracy across the nation.

## ALEC's Corporate Board

--in recent past or present

- AT&T Services, Inc.
- centerpoint360
- UPS
- Bayer Corporation
- GlaxoSmithKline
- Energy Future Holdings
- Johnson & Johnson
- Coca-Cola Company
- PhRMA
- Kraft Foods, Inc.
- Coca-Cola Co.
- Pfizer Inc.
- Reed Elsevier, Inc.
- DIAGEO
- Peabody Energy
- Intuit, Inc.
- Koch Industries, Inc.
- ExxonMobil
- Verizon
- Reynolds American Inc.
- Wal-Mart Stores, Inc.
- Salt River Project
- Altria Client Services, Inc.
- American Bail Coalition
- State Farm Insurance

For more on these corporations, search at [www.SourceWatch.org](http://www.SourceWatch.org).

**DID YOU KNOW?** Corporations VOTED to adopt this. Through ALEC, global companies work as "equals" in "unison" with politicians to write laws to govern your life. Big Business has "a VOICE and a VOTE," according to newly exposed documents. **DO YOU?**

[Home](#) → [Model Legislation](#) → [Health and Human Services](#)

### Learnfare Act

Did you know that global pharmaceutical company Bayer Healthcare was the corporate co-chair in 2011?

#### Summary

The Learnfare Act requires that all teenagers who are included in grant of public assistance who are parents or who are residing with a natural or adoptive parent and who have not graduated from high school or received a high school equivalency diploma, attend school.

#### Model Legislation

{Title, enacting clause, etc.}

**Section 1.** The purpose of this Act is to provide rules for the administration of LEARNFARE, a program that requires that all teenagers who are included in grant of public assistance who are parents or who are residing with a natural or adoptive parent and who have not graduated from high school or received a high school equivalency diploma, attend school.

**Section 2.** As used in this Act the following terms have the following meanings:

(A) "Ceased to attend" means that a teenager has 20 consecutive full school days of unexcused absences;

(B) "Dropout" means a teenager who has ceased to attend school, continues to reside in the school district, does not attend another school, does not participate in a home schooling program, has not graduated from high school or received a high school equivalency diploma, and does not have an acceptable excuse under Section 6;

(C) "Excused absence" means that the reason for the absence meets the school district's definition of a valid reason for a teenager not attending school;

(D) "Full day" means the entire school day as defined by the school district;

(E) "High school equivalency diploma" means a certificate of educational achievement issued under (insert appropriate statute);

(F) "Home schooling program" means a valid home schooling program as authorized under (insert appropriate statute);

(G) "LEARNFARE" means a program established under this Act that requires that all teenagers who are included in a grant of public assistance, who are parents or who are residing with a natural or adoptive parent and who have not graduated from high school or received a high school equivalency diploma, attend school;

(H) "Monthly attendance requirement" means that a teenager have no more than two full days of unexcused absences in a calendar month;

(I) "School" means:

(1) a public school as described in {insert appropriate statute};

(2) a private school as described in {insert appropriate statute};

(3) a vocational, technical or adult education school pursuant to {insert appropriate statute};

(4) the course of study meeting the standards established by the Department of Education under {insert appropriate statute} for the granting of a high school equivalency diploma;

(J) "School district" means the territorial unit for school administration as described in {insert appropriate statute};

(K) "Teenager" means a person who is 13 to 19 years of age, and who is a parent or residing with his or her natural or adoptive parent;

(L) "Unexcused absence" means that the reason for the absence does not meet the school district's definition of a valid reason for the teenager not to attend school.

**Section 3.** (A) A teenager shall attend school full or part time, except that a teenager

who is participating in a home schooling program, has graduated from high school or received a high school equivalency diploma, is exempt from the school attendance requirement under this Act.

(B) a teenager who is required to participate in LEARNFARE under this Act shall be considered to be meeting the school attendance requirements under the following circumstances:

(1) A teenager who is required to attend school shall be considered to have met the attendance requirement by having fewer than ten full days of unexcused absences from school during the most recently completed school semester;

(2) a teenager who has ten or more full days of unexcused absences from school during the most recently completed school semester or was a dropout and returned to school during the semester under review or who is unable to verify previous attendance shall comply with the monthly attendance requirement;

(3) if the school that the teenager is currently enrolled in does not keep daily attendance records, the teenager shall be considered to be meeting the monthly attendance requirement if the school verifies the continuing enrollment of the teenager in the semester under review;

(4) the teenager is not required to comply with attendance requirements when the school the teenager is attending is not in regular session, including during the summer.

(C) Either the teenager or his parent shall cooperate in providing information needed to verify enrollment information or good cause under Section 6 of this Act. If neither one cooperates, the teenager shall be ineligible for aid as provided under {insert appropriate statute}.

**Section 4.** (A) The Department of Public Welfare {or insert appropriate department} shall review school attendance information at all initial eligibility determinations and at all reviews under {insert appropriate statute}.

(B) The signature of an applicant on an application for Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) or General Relief constitutes permission for the release of school attendance records for that individual or for any teenager residing with that individual.

(C) (1) The Department shall request information from the teenager's school district about the teenager's attendance in the school district's most recently completed semester of attendance. (2) If information about the teenager's previous school attendance is not available or cannot be verified, the Department shall require the teenager to meet the monthly attendance requirement for one semester or until the information is obtained.

(D) The Department shall use the attendance information provided by a school district to verify attendance for a teenager.

(E) The Department shall review a teenager's claim that he or she has a good cause under Section 6 of this Act for not attending school.

**Section 5.** (A) A school district shall provide information to the Department about the attendance of a teenager who is enrolled in a public school in the district within five working days of the receipt of a written request for such information from the Department.

(B) The school district shall define how many hours of attendance count as a full day and shall provide that information, upon request, to the Department.

(C) In reporting attendance, the school district may not add partial day's absence together to constitute a full day's absence.

**Section 6.** (A) A teenager who is required to attend school to meet LEARNFARE participation requirements under this Act shall comply except when there is good cause which shall be demonstrated by any of the following circumstances:

(1) the teenager is the caretaker of a child less than 90 days old; or

(2) the Department determines that child care services are necessary for the teenager to attend school and there is no child care available. Child care shall be considered unavailable if there is no space available for the child in a licensed day care center within reasonable time and distance, or if the cost of the care where space is available is excessive in the judgment of the Department; or

(3) the department determines that transportation to and from child care is necessary for the teenager's child and there is no public or private transportation available; or

(4) The teenager is prohibited by the school district from attending school and an expulsion is pending. This exemption no longer applies once the teenager has been expelled;

(5) The teenager failed to attend school for one or more of the following reasons:

(a) illness, injury, or incapacity of the teenager or a member of the teenager's family. For purposes of this Paragraph, "member of the teenager's family" means a spouse, child, parent, or other dependent relative who lives with the teenager;

(b) court-required appearances or temporary incarceration;

(c) medical or dental appointments for the teenager or his or her child;

- (d) death of a relative or friend;
- (e) observance of a religious holiday;
- (f) family emergency;
- (g) breakdown in transportation;
- (h) suspension;
- (i) any other circumstance beyond the control of the teenager.

**Section 7.** (A) Upon determination that a teenager has failed without good cause to attend school as required, the Department shall provide written notice to the teenager or his parents (whoever is the primary recipient of aid) which specifies:

(1) that the teenager will be removed from the AFDC or General Relief grant in the next possible payment month because the teenager required to attend school has failed to meet attendance requirements. If the teenager is the only child in the grant, the notice shall state that the entire grant will be discontinued;

(2) the beginning date of the sanction, and the teenager to whom the sanction applies;

(3) the right of the teenager or his parents (whoever is the primary recipient of aid) to request a fair hearing under Subsection (B) of this Section.

(B) The teenager or his parents (whoever is the primary recipient of aid) may request a fair hearing on the Department's determination that the teenager has not been attending school.

(C) If the teenager or his parents do not request a fair hearing under Subsection (B) of this Section, or if, after a fair hearing has been held, the hearing officer finds that the teenager without good cause has failed to meet the monthly attendance requirement, the Department shall discontinue or deny aid to the teenager in the next possible payment month.

(D) A sanction applied under Subsection (C) of this Section shall be effective for one month for each month that the teenager failed to meet the monthly attendance requirement. In the case of a dropout, the sanction shall remain in force until the teenager provides written proof from the school district that he or she has re-enrolled and met the monthly attendance requirement for one calendar month. Any month in which school is in session for at least ten days during the month may be used to meet the attendance requirement under this Subsection. This includes attendance at summer school. The sanction shall be removed the next possible payment month.

**Section 8. {Severability clause.}**

**Section 9. {Repealer clause.}**

**Section 10. {Effective date.}**

Were your  
laws repealed?

*1995 Sourcebook of American State Legislation*

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