

GREEN RIBBON ACT

On September 14, 2023, Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) and Representatives Jahana Hayes (D-CT) and Raúl Grijalva (D-AZ) introduced the Green Ribbon Act ([S. 2822](#), [H.R. 5484](#)). This bill will strengthen and expand the Green Ribbon Schools Program at the Department of Education by boosting the capacity of participating states to expand the number of engaged schools, applicants, and nominees.

History of the U.S. Department of Education's Green Ribbon Award Program

The U.S. Department of Education (ED) Green Ribbon Schools (GRS) is a federal recognition initiative that spotlights school sustainability across the country. Each year, they highlight schools, districts, postsecondary institutions, and early learning centers for their work surrounding health and sustainability.

To be eligible for an award, schools must show progress in all three of the following areas:

- Reduced environmental impacts and costs
- Improved health and wellness
- Effective environmental and sustainability education

Since its start, the program has directly engaged about 3,000 schools in making improvements and educated the public through an estimated 500 national, state, and local press articles. This past year, ED Green Ribbon Schools honored 26 schools, 11 districts, and four postsecondary institutions from 18 states; 56% of the honorees served students who are considered disadvantaged.

About the Bill

The Green Ribbon Act will strengthen the reach of the ED Green Ribbon Schools program and encourage all schools to adopt sustainable practices and strive for recognition.

If passed, the Green Ribbon Act would:

- Give the current program greater impact by strengthening the pipeline of school applicants for the award through greater engagement by participating states.
- Provide the federal award winners with a modest honorarium, which would further help encourage more applicants while enabling the winners to join their peers in Washington, D.C., for the annual award ceremony.
- Extend the program to include awards for nonformal learning institutions (museums, libraries, zoos and aquariums, etc.), with the award program managed by the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

The Green Ribbon Act was introduced through the advocacy of leading environmental and educational organizations:



A Union of Professionals



NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING THE GREEN RIBBON ACT

Leads: American Federation of Teachers, Campaign for Environmental Literacy, Center for Green Schools at the U.S. Green Building Council, National Education Association, National Wildlife Federation

Action for the Climate Emergency	International WELL Building Institute
American Alliance of Museums	National Center for Science Education
American Association for State and Local History	National Indian Education Association
American Institute of Architects	National Science Teaching Association
American Public Gardens Association	New Buildings Institute
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education	North American Association for Environmental Education
Association of African American Museums	Parliament of the World's Religions
Association of Science and Technology Centers	SEI (Strategic Energy Innovations)
Association of Science Museum Directors	State Education and Environment Roundtable
Association of Zoos and Aquariums	Sunrise Movement
Captain Planet Foundation	Sustainable Forestry Initiative/Project Learning Tree
EcoRise	21st Century School Fund
George Mason University Center for Climate Change Communication	The Cloud Institute for Sustainability Education
Go Green Initiative	The Wild Center
Green Schools National Network	UndauntedK12
Green Schoolyards America	US Partnership for Education for Sustainable Development
Hip Hop Caucus	Xerces Society for Invertebrate Conservation

State Organizations: Alliance for New Jersey Environmental Education (NJ), Association for Environmental and Outdoor Education (CA), Blue Ocean Society for Marine Conservation (NH), Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education (CO), Connecticut Green LEAF (CT), Connecticut Outdoor & Environmental Education Association (CT), Kansas Association for Conservation and Environmental Education (KS), Massachusetts Environmental Education Society (MA), New Hampshire Environmental Educators (NH), Pacific Education Institute (WA), Portland State University Digital City Testbed Center (OR), Rhode Island Environmental Education Association (RI), Squam Lakes Natural Science Center (NH), Ten Strands (CA), White Mountain Nature and Wildlife Center (AZ)