



## **LEGISLATIVE ALERT**

February 26, 2015

Dear Representative:

I am writing on behalf of the AFL-CIO to urge you to oppose The Student Success Act (H.R. 5). This proposal would undermine over five decades of work aimed at leveling the playing field for all students and would harm our nation's most disadvantaged students.

I also urge you to support the following amendments:

- Davis, Joyce (#119) to maintain current collective bargaining rights, memoranda of understanding, or other local agreements;
- Fudge (#20) to ensure the continuation of state and local investment in education;
- Quigley, Serrano, McKinley (#96) to restore the paraprofessional qualification requirements in current law;
- Duffy, Wilson (#56) to require schools districts to provide information to parents about assessment policies and procedures;
- Bonameci, Costello (#104) to allow grant funds to audit, improve, and streamline assessment systems;
- Goodlatte (#74) to allow local educational authorities to administer their own locally designed academic assessment system;
- Cohen (#75) to allow Title II funds to be used for restorative justice and conflict resolution programs.

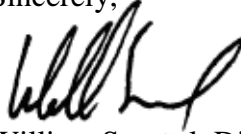
The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) was intended to promote equal opportunity in education by providing federal resources to public schools serving disadvantaged student populations. The Student Success Act (H.R. 5) would instead allow states and school districts to redirect funds away from the specific populations of students the ESEA was intended to assist. Under this legislation, money for English language learners or low-income students could be redirected to programs serving entirely different populations.

The Student Success Act also includes a portability provision that would undermine a fundamental purpose of Title I of the ESEA. Instead of increasing funds to public schools with high concentrations of poverty and high-need students, this bill would have funds follow a child to any public school, regardless of the receiving school's poverty level. Given all the data on the effects of living in areas with high concentrations of poverty, this provision would have a devastating impact on students and schools in poor communities.

The Student Success Act also would allow states to retreat from the college- and career-ready standards needed to prepare students for the 21st-century knowledge economy. It would no longer require states to guarantee that schools provide all students the opportunities needed to help our nation rebuild a strong and vibrant middle class and maintain global competitiveness. This bill would also eliminate maintenance-of-effort requirements that currently ensure federal funds are used to augment, not replace, support provided by states and local districts to schools serving students with the greatest needs. This will serve to compound an already bleak financial outlook facing many districts that are still reeling from state and local budget cuts.

Today more than 50 percent of children in the United States live in or near poverty and half the students in public schools are poor. We urge you to vote against the Student Success Act and instead reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act in a manner that will help reclaim the promise of public education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "William Samuel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "W" and a long, sweeping tail.

William Samuel, Director  
Government Affairs Department

WS/CC/lkr