

# **Republican Education Bill** **Unites Wide-Ranging Opposition**

House Republicans' proposed reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has garnered a wide range of opposition. Instead of working toward a bipartisan solution to reauthorize ESEA, the Republican bill includes extreme policies that undermine our ability to ensure all students receive a world-class education. The bill:

- Includes drastic cuts to education funding.
- Removes accountability provisions that ensure all students receive a quality education: the bill allows states to weaken standards and the assessment process; and allows states to establish weak accountability systems that would not require performance targets for student achievement, specific actions to improve low performance, or consequences if schools do not improve.
- Lowers standards for kids with disabilities by allowing states to establish a separate and unequal track for students with disabilities.
- Reduces equity by shifting funds for teacher training away from vulnerable school districts, and by allowing funds for special needs populations to be redirected elsewhere.

Business organizations, teacher unions, civil rights and disability advocates, conservative think-tanks, and others have all voiced serious concerns with the legislation. Here's a look at what some organizations had to say about H.R. 5:

## Heritage Foundation:

"Absent these reforms to the Student Success Act, the proposal contains policy shortcomings that overwhelm some of the improvements to existing statute that it could create." [\[7/11/13\]](#)

## U.S. Chamber of Commerce, The Education Trust, National Council of La Raza, and the National Center for Learning Disabilities:

"Unfortunately, we believe the legislation falls short of the lessons learned and the need to ensure all students, especially those most in need, are college and career ready." [\[6/19/13\]](#)

## American Federation of Teachers:

"This bill would undermine the long-standing purpose of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) by dismantling 45 years of legislative policy committed to ensuring that disadvantaged children are provided a high-quality education that allows them to compete on a level playing field with their more advantaged peers. ... The AFT is particularly concerned that the Student Success Act walks away from the ESEA's historic commitment to ensuring that all children have access to a high-quality Education ... [the bill] throws the baby out with the bath water. That is not an answer. That is shirking responsibility." [\[6/18/13\]](#)

Collaboration to Promote Self-Determination:

“We cannot support this current proposal and respectfully request that Congress not move forward in considering it until more efforts are made to ensure equitable access to education for all students and stronger accountability measures for states and local education agencies (LEAs) that are inclusive of all students, including students with the most significant cognitive disabilities. “ [\[6/18/13\]](#)”

Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities:

“the bill represents a significant step backwards in the area of transparency, particularly with respect to providing parents with information about their child’s teachers” [\[6/18/13\]](#)”

Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights:

“The Student Success Act is an anachronism and would once again allow states to ignore disparities in education for children of color, low-income students, students with disabilities, and ELLs. This would be devastating for these communities and for our nation as a whole; therefore, we strongly urge you to vote against the ‘Student Success Act,’ H.R. 5.” [\[6/18/13\]](#)”

National Center for Learning Disabilities:

“In summary, the policies H.R. 5 advances would reverse the progress that has been made for students with learning disabilities over the past decade.” [\[6/17/13\]](#)”

National Education Association:

“...as a whole [this bill] erodes the historical federal role in public education: targeting resources to marginalized student populations as a means of helping to ensure equity of opportunity for all students.” [\[6/19/13\]](#)”

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL):

“Because of our concern around these fundamental issues, TESOL International Association cannot support the Student Success Act in its present form. Great progress has been made under the current law in drawing attention to, and serving the needs of, ELLs [English Language Learners]. TESOL urges you to address the concerns herein so this progress is not lost.” [\[7/1/13\]](#)”