



July 8, 2015

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OPPOSE AMENDMENTS TO FURTHER WEAKEN ESEA
Oppose Salmon Amendment #129 and Walker Amendment #36

Dear Representative:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, we urge you to oppose Salmon Amendment #129 and Walker Amendment #36 when the House considers H.R.5, the Student Success Act. These amendments further weaken the underlying bill and would completely undermine the longstanding purpose of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) – to raise achievement for vulnerable children.

Since 1965 and over the course of multiple reauthorizations, the core purpose of the ESEA has been to help schools, districts, and states meet the additional educational needs of low-income students, students of color, students with disabilities, English learners and Native American students. These two partisan amendments subvert that longstanding purpose and turn back the clock on educational opportunity. **Salmon Amendment #129 would essentially eviscerate the requirement that schools account for the learning of all students through the law's participation rate requirement.** Prior to that requirement, students were routinely excluded from the general assessment, their learning was not taken into account, and their needs were ignored. The Leadership Conference believes that every child's learning should matter and the law must continue to ensure that it does.

Walker Amendment #36 is an extreme proposal to remove all requirements that federal funds reach their intended recipients – vulnerable children – and instead allows states to accept funds with almost no protections. Not only does this amendment cast aside longstanding Congressional intent, and the protections of a critical civil rights law, it abandons children and jeopardizes their education. Congress must continue to maintain important guardrails around the use of federal dollars and ensure that the educational needs of vulnerable children are met.

We hope that we can count on your opposition to these pernicious amendments and your support for educationally disadvantaged students. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Nancy Zirkin, Leadership Conference Executive Vice President, at zirkin@civilrights.org, or Liz King, Leadership Conference Director of Education Policy at king@civilrights.org.

Sincerely,

Wade Henderson
President & CEO

Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President