



July 14, 2015

## EVERY CHILD'S LEARNING MATTERS

### Support the Murphy-Booker-Warren-Coons-Durbin Accountability Amendment #2241 to the Every Child Achieves Act, S.1177

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights and the 37 undersigned organizations, we write to express our support for the Murphy-Booker-Warren-Coons-Durbin Accountability Amendment #2241 to the Every Child Achieves Act, S.1177, as a step forward in resolving weaknesses with the underlying bill. This amendment makes clearer that when all students or any group of students are struggling in a school, action must be taken. For every child to achieve, their learning must matter in decisions about where and when to intervene and provide supports when students are struggling.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act, first passed in 1965, came in the midst of the civil rights movement and was a critical component of the war on poverty. Recognizing that students in concentrated poverty, who were disproportionately of color, faced greater barriers to educational success, the law sought to respond to community demands for federal support to high-poverty schools and districts. During the Senate debate 50 years ago, Senator Robert Kennedy implored his colleagues “that we can do something to make sure that we have the highest standards possible and that the money that we are going to expend ... is not wasted but that it is—we are making progress in each one of these communities.” We echo that call—that resources be paired with the expectation of progress for all students—today.

We strongly support maintaining, as the Every Child Achieves Act does, the requirements for college or career aligned state standards, statewide annual assessment, disaggregated student achievement (including the 1 percent cap on using alternate assessments based on alternate achievement standards to assess students with the most significant cognitive disabilities), and goals for achievement and high school graduation. These tools provide invaluable information to parents, communities, educators, advocates, and policymakers to help ensure all students an equitable and excellent education. The power of this reporting, however, is greatly curtailed by the absence of meaningful accountability. **States must be required to identify schools where all students or any group of students are not meeting goals and to intervene in ways that raise achievement for students not meeting state standards. We need accountability for schools where groups of students are not making progress, for the lowest performing schools, and for schools with very low graduation rates.**

We urge you to demonstrate your support for the achievement of every child in every school by voting “yes” on the Murphy-Booker-Warren-Coons-Durbin Accountability Amendment #2241 and to continue pressing for strengthened accountability as the bill moves forward. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Nancy Zirkin, Leadership Conference Executive Vice President, at [zirkin@civilrights.org](mailto:zirkin@civilrights.org), or Liz King, Leadership Conference Director of Education Policy at [king@civilrights.org](mailto:king@civilrights.org).

#### Officers

##### Chair

Judith L. Lichtman  
National Partnership for  
Women & Families

##### Vice Chairs

Jacqueline Pata  
National Congress of American Indians  
Thomas A. Saenz  
Mexican American Legal  
Defense and Educational Fund

Hilary Shelton

NAACP

##### Treasurer

Lee A. Saunders  
American Federation of State,  
County & Municipal Employees

#### Board of Directors

Barbara Arnwine

Lawyers' Committee for  
Civil Rights Under Law  
Cornell William Brooks

NAACP

Lily Eskelsen Garcia

National Education Association

Marcia D. Greenberger

National Women's Law Center

Chad Griffin

Human Rights Campaign

Linda D. Hallman

AAUW

Mary Kay Henry

Service Employees International Union

Sherrilyn Ifill

NAACP Legal Defense and

Educational Fund, Inc.

Jo Ann Jenkins

AARP

Michael B. Keegan

People for the American Way

Elisabeth MacNamara

League of Women Voters of the

United States

Marc Morial

National Urban League

Mee Moua

Asian Americans Advancing Justice |

AAJC

Janet Murguia

National Council of La Raza

Debra Ness

National Partnership for

Women & Families

Mary Rose Oakar

American-Arab

Anti-Discrimination Committee

Terry O'Neill

National Organization for Women

Priscilla Ouchida

Japanese American Citizens League

Mark Perriello

American Association of

People with Disabilities

Rabbi Jonah Pesner

Religious Action Center

Of Reform Judaism

Anthony Romero

American Civil Liberties Union

Shanna Smith

National Fair Housing Alliance

Richard L. Trumka

AFL-CIO

Randi Weingarten

American Federation of Teachers

Dennis Williams

International Union, UAW

#### Policy and Enforcement

##### Committee Chair

Michael Lieberman

Anti-Defamation League

##### President & CEO

Wade J. Henderson

##### Executive Vice President & COO

Karen McGill Lawson

Sincerely,

The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights  
Alliance for Excellent Education  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee (ADC)  
Association of University Centers on Disabilities  
Center for American Progress  
Children's Defense Fund  
Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates  
Democrats for Education Reform  
Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund  
Easter Seals  
Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law  
Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights Under Law  
League of United Latin American Citizens  
MALDEF  
NAACP  
NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, Inc.  
National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities  
National Center for Learning Disabilities  
National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools (NCSECS)  
National Center on Time & Learning  
National Council of La Raza (NCLR)  
National Disability Rights Network  
National Down Syndrome Congress  
National Indian Education Association  
National Urban League  
National Women's Law Center  
New Leaders  
PolicyLink  
Southeast Asia Resource Action Center  
Southern Education Foundation  
Southern Poverty Law Center  
Stand for Children  
Teach For America  
Teach Plus  
The Education Trust  
TNTF  
UNCF