



League of United Latin American Citizens

February 8, 2017

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United States Senate
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the League of United Latin American Citizens (LULAC), the nation's oldest and largest Latino civil rights organization, I write to express our strong opposition to the nomination of Elisabeth "Betsy" DeVos as the next U.S. Secretary of Education. Ms. DeVos' seeming lack of understanding of critical civil rights education laws poses a significant challenge to advancing equity and accountability in our public schools.

Throughout her confirmation hearing, Ms. DeVos had multiple opportunities to assert her support for the strong enforcement of critical civil rights laws that promote equity and equal accountability for all students. Instead of affirming the spirit of equity and equal accountability, she made some troubling statements regarding the education of students with disabilities, allowing guns in schools, and doubled-down on her support for vouchers that siphon off limited public dollars from public schools to private schools.

We agree with other civil rights partners that *the role of Secretary of Education as the enforcer of education and civil rights laws is central to advancing a shared vision of an inclusive and diverse system of high quality public education that enables every student to succeed.* Ms. DeVos has neither the experience, the track-record, or the interest (based on her statements at the hearing) to be the champion we need at this critical time.

With students of color now representing the majority of students in our public school system, our parents and students need to have a champion in the U.S. Department of Education that will look out for their interests. We need a Secretary of Education that will be *committed to implementing and enforcing laws protecting students from discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex and disability and those laws that provide for educational opportunity from early childhood through graduate school.* We need a trusted partner at the Department of Education who will fight side-by-side with civil rights organizations like LULAC to advance educational equity and equal accountability.

LULAC does not believe that Ms. DeVos is the champion we need for our students at this critical time. We urge you to oppose her nomination and help ensure that the Department of Education continues to be the strong champion our parents and students need. For more information, please contact Luis Torres, Director of Policy and Legislation, at latorres@lulac.org.

Sincerely,

Roger C. Rocha, Jr.
LULAC National President