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June 10, 2015

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

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 great concern with the most current version of the Every Child Achieves Act of 2015. As written, the bill lacks critical civil rights protections and falls short of the original intent of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). In particular, without strong subgroup accountability, better data, resource equity and a strong federal role to intervene when states are not acting in good faith, the ECAA does a great disservice to Latino children and nation, and cannot become law.

Since January of this year, Congress has worked on efforts to renew the law. While we were encouraged by the initial efforts of Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray to attempt a rewrite of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), more needs to be done to strengthen the bill. Consistent with our civil rights colleagues, LULAC believes the following needs to be improved as the bill moves to the Senate floor:

1. ESEA must hold schools and districts accountable when they fail to meet targets for students including Latino students and English learners.

The current version of the ECAA fails to require schools from intervening when a particular subgroup of students is not performing well. In addition, states must also provide opportunities for improvement in schools with low graduation rates. These provisions are necessary in closing the achievement gaps for Latino students. This is an important civil right component that should be added to the ESEA, without it, this civil rights bill is fundamentally flawed.

2. ESEA must require state intervention when there are disparities in access to educational resources.

Latino students are 1.5 times more likely than their white counterparts to be taught by inexperienced teachers. More needs to be done to make sure that subgroups of students and students that come from low income communities have equal access to highly effective teachers and technology. Districts that predominately serve students of color receive approximately \$1,100 less per student than districts that predominately serve White students. The stark disparities in funding result in less access to effective teachers and under-resourced schools.

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3. ESEA must allow for a robust federal role to protect vulnerable students.

The ECAA must protect students by allowing the Department of Education authority to hold states and districts accountable for the federal funds they receive. Without proper authority, there will be no accountability to make sure that funds serve the students that most need it.

4. ESEA must provide additional data disaggregation.

It is important as advocates for all subgroups of students to have additional information on how the intersection of different variables including gender, language status and ethnicity has an impact on educational outcomes for students.

We appreciate your consideration of these priorities and stand ready to work with you to make updates to the ESEA. Without strong subgroup accountability, better data, resource equity and a strong federal role to intervene when states are not acting in good faith, the ECAA cannot become law. Please feel free to have your staff reach out to Luis Torres, LULAC Director of Policy, at latorres@lulac.org should you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Margaret Moran
LULAC National President