



**HISPANIC
EDUCATION
COALITION**

July 18, 2013

House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Vote NO on the Student Success Act of 2013

Dear Member of the House of Representative:

On behalf of the Hispanic Education Coalition (HEC), which unites more than 20 organizations dedicated to improving educational opportunities and outcomes for the more than 54 million Hispanics living in the United States and Puerto Rico, we write to oppose the Student Success Act (SSA), H.R. 5. It is past time to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), but any attempt at reauthorization must work to improve the act and educational opportunities for all Latino students. Unfortunately, HEC finds the SSA to be a dramatic rollback of many core features of ESEA that secure educational opportunities for Latino and Latina students, English learner (EL) students, and migrant students.

No Child Left Behind contained a simple principle – that all children deserved to be educated. A federal role in ensuring an education for all students must remain within ESEA. SSA eliminates federal performance targets, allowing states to set targets lower than 100 percent proficiency for 100 percent of students.

The bill abandons individual subgroup accountability, marking a disappointing return to the past, when states were free to ignore the educational disparities of racial and ethnic minorities, ELs, economically disadvantaged students, and students with disabilities. Many of these groups have unique educational needs, which states have failed to address without federal involvement. Removing the federal requirement that schools be held accountable for the performance of the children we represent is something the HEC must firmly oppose.

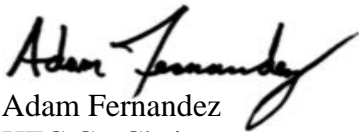
SSA makes Title I a block grant by moving programs for migrant students, EL students, and economically disadvantaged students into one title. HEC opposes block granting these programs, which removes the requirements that federal funds actually be used to address the unique needs of these students.

H.R. 5 also makes permanent the cuts to education spending, initially implemented as part of sequestration. Given that Hispanic students make up one-third of the students served by Title I, and more than two-thirds of the students served by Title III, these cuts disproportionately harm the Hispanic community. As Latinos and EL students continue to grow as a proportion of society, the programs serving them should be expanded, not cut.

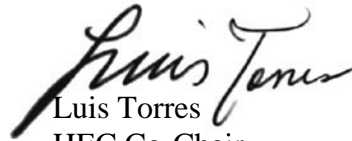
Now is not the time to allow states to ignore the unique educational needs of an increasingly diverse student base. Accordingly, HEC must oppose the SSA.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the HEC co-chairs: Adam Fernandez of the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund, at afernandez@maldef.org, or Luis Torres of the League of United Latin American Citizens, at latorres@lulac.org.

Sincerely,



Adam Fernandez
HEC Co-Chair
Mexican American Legal
Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF)



Luis Torres
HEC Co-Chair
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