



**Council of the
Great City Schools**

May 23, 2011

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman, Education and Workforce Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Mr. Chairman:

The Council of the Great City Schools, the coalition of the nation's largest central city school districts, writes in support of H.R. 1891 pending before the Committee. The bill primarily will repeal some three dozen federal education programs that are no longer funded or have never been funded. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) has been long overdue for streamlining and simplification.

In the Great City Schools' ESEA Reauthorization Recommendations, the Council pointed out that each ESEA reauthorization results in more programs, provisions and requirements being added to the Act. Rarely is anything deleted; instead provisions are expanded and layered on top of other provisions. The Committee's ESEA Compilation of Federal Education Laws in elementary and secondary education ballooned by forty percent with the enactment of the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. More importantly, this thousand-page federal education statute unnecessarily complicates and at times fragments the delivery of critical educational services.

The Council has consistently recommended consolidating numerous smaller ESEA programs into larger formula grants programs to local school districts. While individual member districts may prefer to retain one or another of the programs being repealed by the bill, including the handful of programs currently funded for FY 2011, an array of small grant programs contributes little to the academic attainment necessary for national competitiveness nor helps overcome the achievement gaps that serve as a persistent barrier to educational and economic opportunity.

The Council supports the Committee's effort in H.R. 1891 to begin to clean up, streamline, and refocus the Elementary and Secondary Education Act on critical national education priorities.

Sincerely,



Michael Casserly
Executive Director

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