



NATIONAL CONFERENCE of STATE LEGISLATURES

The Forum for America's Ideas

Curtis Bramble
Senate President Pro Tempore
Utah
President, NCSL

Karl Aro
Director of Administration
Department of Legislative Services
Maryland
Staff Chair, NCSL

William T. Pound
Executive Director

December 1, 2015

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, H-232
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
U.S. Capitol, H-204
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Leader Pelosi:

The National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) supports the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) and urges passage of the conference agreement. This effort, culminating in a nearly-unanimous conference committee vote, is a true testament to the bipartisan recognition that change is greatly needed in our nation's education system. ESSA acknowledges the traditional role of states and localities in guiding education policy while maintaining accountability and promoting a more healthy state-federal relationship.

NCSL appreciates that Congress has taken notice of the priorities we outlined for reauthorization, and are glad to see so many reflected in this agreement. We are especially pleased that the conferees recognized the importance of having state legislators at the table when the state Title I plan is developed. As elected officials, we welcome this responsibility and the accountability that comes with it to the citizens of our states.

We are also pleased with the special attention given to children and youth who are neglected, delinquent, at risk, Native American, or among other special populations. Charting a path for these children to be fully integrated into the educational system and participating in a regular elementary, middle and high school experience is a critical goal. It is also key that students' records and other important documentation travel with them, wherever they go.

By moving to fix the broken policies of No Child Left Behind, you are ensuring that students will not have to wait yet another year for their schools to have the flexibility they need to help them succeed. The state accountability system in ESSA benefits your constituents—*our* constituents—by allowing states to put in place common sense measures that maintain high standards and help parents better understand how both students and their schools are performing.

As the voice of 7,383 state legislators from across the country, we again urge you to support the conference agreement.

Denver
7700 East First Place
Denver, Colorado 80230-7143
Phone 303.364.7700 Fax 303.364.7800

Washington
444 North Capitol Street, N.W. Suite 515
Washington, D.C. 20001
Phone 202.624.5400 Fax 202.737.1069

Website www.ncsl.org
Email info@ncsl.org

December 1, 2015

p. 2

Sincerely,



Representative Sharon Tomiko Santos
Washington House of Representatives
Co-Chair, NCSL Education Committee



Senator Howard Stephenson
Utah Senate
Co-Chair, NCSL Education Committee

cc: Members of the United States House of Representatives