



Student Success Act (H.R. 5) and Amendments

February 26, 2015

Dear Representative,

On behalf of the more than 170,000 bipartisan members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), **I urge you to oppose H.R. 5 and to consider AAUW recommendations on several amendments listed below.** Cosponsorship and votes associated with these issues may be scored in the *AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record* for the 114th Congress.

AAUW maintains that congressional reauthorization of No Child Left Behind/Elementary and Secondary Education Act, not the Secretary of Education's waivers, is the best way to ensure high standards and greater accountability in our nation's public schools. Unfortunately, H.R. 5 is a step backwards in protecting educational opportunity and closing the achievement gap for all students. H.R. 5 eliminates important federal protections and students' civil rights, particularly for minority, low income, and underprivileged students and students with disabilities. It fails to hold states and school districts accountable for closing achievement gaps and ensuring our students are meeting college-and career-ready standards. It eliminates the Women's Educational Equity Act, the only grants program exclusively for Title IX assistance to states, schools, and nonprofit groups. It fails to address sexual harassment and bullying. It also does not address the importance of early education for young children.

H.R. 5 also lowers education funding to 2012 levels, cheating our students out of sorely needed resources. It also eliminates maintenance-of-effort provisions that prevent states and municipalities from supplanting federal funding for public schools. Furthermore, new "portability" schemes included in the bill allow federal funds for high-poverty schools and vulnerable groups of students to be re-directed for other purposes. For these reasons, we urge you to oppose this bill.

Amendments

AAUW's member approved public policy priorities support quality public education and promote equitable efforts to close the persistent achievement gap that disproportionately affects low-income children and students from minority communities.¹ It is possible—and necessary—to maintain a commitment to high standards and greater accountability in our nation's public schools through ESEA reauthorization. However, that commitment cannot be in principle only—it must be accompanied by federal commitment and financial assistance to make it a reality. The following vote recommendations are based on AAUW public policy priorities.

Number	Sponsor	Rules Committee Description	AAUW Vote Recommendation
20	Fudge (OH)	Ensures continued state investment in educating students by requiring states to demonstrate that the level of state and local funding remains constant from year to year.	YES AAUW supports maintenance-of-effort requirements. Federal funding is meant to supplement a state's education budget not replace it.

23	Scott, Bobby (VA)	SUBSTITUTE Revised This amendment repeals H.R. 5 and replaces the bill text with a substitute amendment that provides robust funding levels, replaces the outdated, rigid mandates of No Child Left Behind, and maintains civil rights and equity protections that ensure all students graduate from high school college- and career-ready.	YES AAUW's member-passed public policy priorities support quality public education and promote equitable efforts to close the persistent achievement gap that disproportionately affects low-income children and students from minority communities. Rep. Scott's substitute amendment maintains a commitment to high standards and greater accountability in our nation's public schools and is accompanied by federal commitment and financial assistance needed to prepare all students to be college- and career- ready.
40	Moore, Gwen (WI) , Davis, Danny K. (IL), Wilson (FL)	Delays implementation of new Title II formula until the Secretary of Education determines that the implementation will not reduce funding for schools serving high percentages of students in poverty.	YES AAUW's member-passed public policy priorities support quality public education and promote equitable efforts to close the persistent achievement gap that disproportionately affects low-income children and students from minority communities. ² It is possible—and necessary—to maintain a commitment to high standards and greater accountability in our nation's public schools through ESEA reauthorization. However, that commitment cannot be in principle only—it must be accompanied by federal commitment and financial assistance to make it a reality.
67	Kennedy (MA) , McGovern (MA), Moulton (MA), Capuano (MA), Neal (MA), Keating (MA), Lynch (MA)	Authorizes the STEM Gateways grant program as an allowable use of flexible funding received by state educational agencies. States could award grants to LEAs and qualified partner organizations to support the success of women, minorities, and low-income students in rigorous STEM academics.	YES AAUW supports promoting and strengthening science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) education, especially for girls and other underrepresented populations. AAUW's 2010 report, <i>Why So Few? Women in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics</i> , found that environmental and social barriers continue to block women and girls' full participation in STEM education and fields.

73	Meeks (NY)	Would require that the annual, statewide assessments measure student growth and require that student growth be a component of achievement within the accountability system established by a given state.	YES AAUW is supportive of provisions encouraging the use of multiple measures of student achievement such as achievement and growth in English, math, and science, and if states choose, student achievement and growth in other subjects.
74	Goodlatte (VA)	Would provide flexibility to localities by providing States with the authority to allow local educational agencies to administer their own, locally designed academic assessment system, in place of the State-designed academic system. The same requirements as laid out by this Act for State-designed academic assessments would also apply to any locally designed academic assessment.	NO AAUW remains committed to ensuring strong academic principles and closing the achievement gap for all children—objectives at the heart of ESEA. AAUW also believes that the federal government has a critical role to play in attaining these goals and endorses the use of a robust accountability system that helps ensure all children are prepared to be successful, participating members of our democracy.
78	Nolan (MN) , McCollum (MN), Kirkpatrick (AZ), Lujan (NM)	Amends the current stated policy of the United States with respect to the education of Indian children to ensure that Indian children do not attend school in buildings that are dilapidated or deteriorating, as part of the unique and continuing trust relationship with, and responsibility to, the Indian people.	YES AAUW's member-passed public policy priorities support quality public education and promote equitable efforts to close the persistent achievement gap that disproportionately affects low-income children and students from minority communities.

93	Jackson Lee (TX)	Supports accountability-based programs and activities that are designed to enhance school safety, which may include research-based bullying prevention, cyberbullying prevention, disruption of recruitment activity by groups or individuals involved in violent extremism, and gang prevention programs as well as intervention programs regarding bullying.	YES AAUW's report <i>Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School</i> ³ shows that our country is dealing with a pervasive problem: Nearly half of all 7th-12th grade students said that they have encountered some form of sexual harassment – in person and online. Hostile school environments can lead to disastrous outcomes, especially for students who are targeted for failing to conform to gender stereotypes. ⁴ AAUW supports funding for programs that would provide schools with resources to prevent bullying and harassment and improve safety and security.
101	DeSaulnier (CA)	Requires LEAs to develop agreements with Head Start and other agencies to carry out early childhood education activities.	YES Providing a foundation of strong early childhood education will help improve and sustain achievement in later years and save precious taxpayer dollars down the road. AAUW supports Head Start and Early Head Start to ensure all children are prepared for school, as well as access to high-quality and affordable child care to ease the burden on working families and expand educational opportunities.
104	Bonamici (OR) , Costello (PA)	Allows State educational agencies and eligible entities to use Local Academic Flexible Grant funds to audit and streamline assessment systems, eliminates unnecessary assessments, and improves the use of assessments.	YES AAUW supports improving school accountability measures. Schools should be held accountable for demonstrating that they are meeting educational goals. This includes audits of existing systems with the goal of reducing duplicative or poor-quality state assessments while maintaining annual, statewide assessments for all students (in grades 3-8 and at least once in high school) that are aligned with, and measure each student's progress toward meeting, the state's college and career-ready standards.

126	Messer, Luke (IN), Polis (CO)	Late Expresses the sense of Congress that charter schools are a critical part of our education system in this Nation and that Congress must support opening more quality charter schools to help students succeed in their future.	YES AAUW believes it is in students' best interests to be offered public school choice and flexibility, and public schools should continue to encourage effective charter schools, cutting-edge programs, and innovative classroom techniques. Such flexibility and innovation, however, must be consistent with civil rights laws, including Title IX.
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For more than 130 years, AAUW members have fought for educational equity and achievement in our nation's public schools. Reauthorization of ESEA represents a tremendous opportunity to make significant strides in this direction, and we are committed to putting our full resources behind this effort. AAUW looks forward to working with you on this significant legislation in the year ahead.

Cosponsorship and votes associated with this issue may be scored in the *AAUW Action Fund Congressional Voting Record* for the 114th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Erin Prangley, associate director of government relations, at 202/785-7730, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz
Vice President, Public Policy

¹ AAUW. (June 2013). *Public Policy Principles 2013-2015*. www.aauw.org/resource/principles-and-priorities/

² AAUW. (June 2013). *Public Policy Principles 2011-2013*. www.aauw.org/resource/principles-and-priorities/

³ AAUW. (2011). *Crossing the Line: Sexual Harassment at School*. www.aauw.org/research/crossing-the-line/

⁴ GLSEN. (September 5, 2012). *2011 National School Climate Survey: LGBT Youth Face Pervasive, But Decreasing Levels of Harassment*. www.glsen.org/cgi-bin/iowa/all/library/record/2897.html?state=research&type=research