

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

PAMELA JONES-MORTON, FROM
ESTERO, FLORIDA, AWARDED
THE CARNEGIE MEDAL

HON. TREY RADEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 19, 2013

Mr. RADEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate Pamela Jones-Morton for being awarded the Carnegie Medal for her bravery in saving Audrey L. Hart and Colleen M. Page from a burning car in Bonita Springs, Florida. I am submitting a copy of the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission's news release which includes Mrs. Jones-Morton's story.

[From the Carnegie Hero Fund Commission, June 25, 2013]

Pamela Jones-Morton saved Audrey L. Hart and Colleen M. Page from burning, Bonita Springs, Florida, December 10, 2011. Audrey 3, was the back-seat passenger in the sport utility vehicle drive by her grandmother, Page, 49, that collided with another vehicle and overturned onto its passenger side. Page was suspended, restrained by her safety belt, and Audrey was secured in a child safety seat as flames erupted on the undercarriage of their vehicle. Driving nearby, Jones-Morton, 64, retired educator, witnessed the accident. She approached the sport utility vehicle and attempted to open the only accessible door, at the rear, but it was locked. At Jones-Morton's urging, Page unlocked the doors. Jones-Morton opened the rear door, cleared items from the cargo area, and entered. The only passageway inside the vehicle was between the tops of the seats and the ceiling, and Jones-Morton maneuvered through it, discovering Audrey as she did so. After struggling to release Audrey from her seat, Jones-Morton carried her to the back of the vehicle and stepped outside. She then reentered it for Page. She made her way to the front of the vehicle and released Page's safety belt, Page then falling to the passenger door. The two women made their way to the back of the vehicle and exited. Flames spread quickly, engulfing the vehicle before firefighters arrived.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Chair, I rise today in opposition of H.R. 5, the so-called Student Success Act.

H.R. 5 reauthorizes the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and it is one that we have waited a long time to revisit.

I hoped that we could work together on this bill because all of us care about our children's growth and development. Both Republicans and Democrats share concerns over the rate at which we are falling behind other nations. And whether you are liberal or conservative, we know that we need to hold our schools accountable for their performance.

That is why this bill is so distressing. H.R. 5 is as dysfunctional as anything else that has come to the floor this Congress. It may not be as pointless as the 38th and 39th votes to repeal Obamacare that we had Wednesday. And it may not have been rammed down our throats quite as aggressively as the Farm Bill was last week. But this bill is still a piece of unilateral maneuvering—when we could be working together.

Instead of spending public funds for the public good, H.R. 5 creates a quota system that shifts funds to private schools that are meant to go to low-income children and schools. Along the way to privatizing our public schools, it decreases accountability for states and school districts by block-granting specialized grant programs—allowing funds meant to address specific hardships to be diverted elsewhere.

I will admit to my friends across the aisle, that while I know some in your base may buy into that pipedream—it is not the way to rebuild America. Formalizing the distinctions between our two Americas is not the key to healing our nation. Nor is depriving extra help to students with special learning barriers.

Give our children their future. Give them a bill that will guarantee a 21st century school system to lead the world. I urge my colleagues to use this opportunity for something greater than mere posturing, and oppose this bill.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Chair, I rise today to express my opposition to H.R. 5, the Student Success Act. This bill undermines the fundamental purpose of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which was created to ensure that disadvantaged children are provided a high-quality education that allows them to compete on a level playing field with their more-advantaged peers.

Among its many problematic provisions, this bill locks in devastating sequestration-level education funding, fails to hold States and districts accountable for supporting and improving the achievement of all students, eliminates

and weakens protections for disadvantaged students, and lacks critical support systems for our Nation's educators.

I believe No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is flawed and must be reformed, and reauthorization presents a tremendous opportunity to make much-needed improvements and bring our education system into the 21st century. However, instead of fixing the problems of NCLB, the Student Success Act does not reflect best practices and fails to strike the appropriate balance between flexibility and accountability.

Reauthorization should support college and career-ready standards, address the overuse of testing in teacher and school evaluations that currently forces educators to substitute test preparation for instruction, and feature an accountability system that includes meaningful targets for improving student attainment that gives schools and districts flexibility in how they achieve those goals.

I urge my colleagues to vote against H.R. 5 and instead support reauthorization that restores our Nation's commitment to providing equal opportunity for all students regardless of background.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. CHRIS VAN HOLLEN

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Chair, I rise in opposition to the legislation on the Floor today, a missed opportunity to reform our education system and ensure that every student has access to a high quality education.

We should be working in a bipartisan manner to correct the widely-acknowledged flaws of No Child Left Behind and make the law more fair, flexible, and responsive to the needs of students. Instead, the bill before us shortchanges our schools and eliminates supports for our most vulnerable populations.

We should be providing the resources our schools need to fix the achievement gap and put a good, supported teacher in every classroom. Instead, today's bill locks in post-sequestration funding levels for K–12 education and cuts back on professional development.

We should be setting high expectations for our schools and giving States flexibility to create accountability systems that improve achievement for every student. Instead, this legislation eliminates requirements for districts to fix struggling schools and ensure that all students make it to graduation.

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.

We should be providing additional support for students with additional challenges—students with disabilities, English-language learners, and at-risk youth. Instead, we have a bill that allows funds to be directed away from these students and allows all students with disabilities to be taught at a lower standard.

We should be encouraging innovation in the classroom, empowering teachers and allowing charter schools to test new ideas. But while this bill would expand charter school availability, it does not require those schools to be accountable or transparent with taxpayer dollars.

Mr. Chair there are many missed opportunities in this bill. It continues the exclusive focus on math and reading, with no support for STEM, geography, history, the arts, or other subjects that provide a well-rounded education. It eliminates funding for afterschool programs and wraparound services that ensure students are prepared to learn.

Our students, teachers, and parents deserve better than this bill. We should come together in a bipartisan fashion, as we have always done with education in the past, to develop real reform that gives our students the skills they need to succeed in our 21st century global economy.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. THOMAS E. PETRI

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Mr. PETRI. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of this amendment and am pleased to be a cosponsor. Charter schools are a critical component of our Nation's public school system and are helping to foster an array of high-quality public school options for parents and their children. Today, more than 6,000 public charter schools serve a diverse student body of more than 2.3 million students in 40 States and the District of Columbia. Unfortunately, however, almost one million students find themselves on charter school waiting lists, unable to attend the school of their choice. We must do more to expand access to these high-quality public school options.

One recent study conducted by the Stanford Center for Research on Education Outcomes found that schools that have a strong start tend to remain highly successful schools in the future. The federal Charter Schools Program has been a crucial tool in helping many charter schools get this strong start. Unfortunately, however, many schools aren't able to use the funds provided through this program in ways that would be most effective for their students. This amendment would simply expand the ways in which charter schools can use the startup funds provided through this program, including for professional development, teacher training, instructional materials, and minor facilities improvements.

The amendment would also give priority to States that allow funding provided to charter

schools to be shared when a student is enrolled in multiple schools. This flexibility will help support the growth of a wide array of high-quality virtual schools and other expanded learning opportunities provided through partner organizations.

Lastly, the amendment simply ensures that charter schools receiving funds under the federal Charter Schools Program are doing outreach to low-income and underserved populations. While charter schools often serve a disproportionate number of low-income students, this amendment will simply ensure that they continue to lead the way in providing access to high-quality public school options.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Chair, funding for education and STEM education is an investment in our future, and perhaps one of the most important investments we make as a Nation. I am very concerned that H.R. 5 guts education funding by 1.3 billion dollars in order to lock in the sequester preventing Congress from being able to appropriate above sequester levels. According to an analysis carried out by the Information Technology and Innovation Foundation, the United States ranks second to last of the 44 countries and regions analyzed in terms of progress in innovation-based competitiveness over the last decade. It used to be that the world's best and brightest flocked to our shores. Now many of our own best and brightest are finding better opportunities in other countries, and we are losing our edge in the competition for top talent from around the world.

Mr. Chair, I have many concerns with this bill. H.R. 5 opts to convert Title 1 funding into a block grant program. This change will disproportionately harm many disadvantaged low-income students. Schools across the country, including some in my Congressional district, rely on these funds to help ensure that all children meet State academic standards. Even the highest performing students in the urban schools are faced with an uphill battle in obtaining the same academic achievement present at the high performing schools. While college preparatory courses are standard for many students in our highest performing public schools, urban school districts often lack the resources to provide the same advantages to their students.

According to the National Education Association, H.R. 5 "as a whole it erodes the historical federal role in public education: targeting resources to marginalized student populations as a means of helping to ensure equity of opportunity for all students . . . [and]

perpetuate[s] a system that intentionally delivers unequal opportunities and quality to children across this country." Even according to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, H.R. 5, "Would reduce school-level accountability, would not provide consequences for low-performing schools, and would not require states to adopt college- and career-ready standards and assessments."

Mr. Chair, the cuts in this bill which will ultimately result in a poorer education for future generations of young Americans represent a gigantic step backwards for our Nation. I strongly believe an investment in education funding is the most sensible investment we can make. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was first enacted at the height of the Civil Rights Movement in order to increase investments in primary and secondary education, strengthen equal access to education and establish high standards and accountability. Mr. Chair, in conclusion, I cannot support the bill we have before us today which erodes and dismantles the key principles of this law.

STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. TREY RADEL

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 18, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 5) to support State and local accountability for public education, protect State and local authority, inform parents of the performance of their children's schools, and for other purposes:

Mr. RADEL. Mr. Chair, I rise today in support of Mr. LUETKEMEYER's amendment that expresses the sense of Congress that States and local education agencies should maintain the ability and responsibility to set curriculum and measure achievement for their students.

This historically has been the case, but today, under current law, the Federal Government believes they should dictate policy at all levels of government.

The Department of Education heavily incentivized and pressured States into adopting the Common Core State Standards Initiatives. These national standards and assessments ultimately determine the curriculum and teaching materials used in the classroom across the nation. Common Core is a one-size-fits-all approach to instructing kids from Florida to Alaska. Washington cannot demand a similar teaching style or test result from a teacher in Cape Coral as they would from one in Milwaukee.

Common Core was adopted by many States through a heavy-handed waiver for the Administration's "Race to the Top" grant program and Title I funding. This "Race to the Top" program imposes a national K-12 core curriculum-testing program in return for funds. This top-down influence erodes state authority over education.

We have little to show for the trillions we have spent on national education mandates. Failed federal education mandates have done enough damage and it is time to once again allow our public schools the freedom to make decisions on what is best for their students.