

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1177, STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Every Student Succeeds Act. This legislation represents a significant bipartisan achievement and one that is long overdue.

For 14 years, our nation's public schools have operated under a well-intentioned but flawed education law, the No Child Left Behind Act. This law set aspirational goals for student learning, and it helped call attention to persistent achievement gaps between groups of students. But No Child Left Behind's rigid measure of academic achievement—that is, the requirement that schools demonstrate adequately yearly progress—and the law's one-size-fits-all interventions for low-performing schools proved to be unworkable.

The unfortunate consequences of No Child Left Behind's inflexible requirements have plagued schools in northwest Oregon and in communities across the country. As states were forced to demonstrate leaps in student achievement, an era of high-stakes testing took much of the joy out of teaching and learning. The drive for higher test scores pressured many schools to narrow their curricular offerings. Schools shifted resources away from arts and music, history, and foreign languages to bolster the tested subjects.

This is the day that students, teachers, school board members, and families across the country have been waiting for—Congress has finally reached an agreement to leave behind No Child Left Behind.

The Every Student Succeeds Act is not perfect legislation, but reaching a bipartisan agreement requires compromise. For example, the bill eliminates or consolidates nearly 50 education programs. Although some of these programs were unfunded, merging the others creates genuine concerns about some states disinvesting in current priorities, like physical education, and spending the money elsewhere. The bill maintains the Secretary of Education's authority to hold states accountable to the law, but it also places new restrictions on the Secretary that raise questions about the federal government's ability to act.

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides a great deal of discretion to states and school districts to improve schools where students are underperforming. Certainly returning control to states and school districts is welcome. Local school boards, superintendents, and educators are best equipped to design school improvement activities that will be effective in their communities. Yet the bill could have done more to make sure that schools make timely improvements when subgroups of students, such as English learners, students of color, low-income students, and students of disabilities, continue to lag behind their peers.

Despite these concerns, the Every Student Succeeds Act represents a significant improvement for our nation's students and schools. The bill authorizes increased funding, which is especially important because more than half of our country's public school students now come from low-income households. The bill rejects a proposal to make Title I funding “portable,” which would have diverted funding from communities with high concentrations of poverty to affluent school districts. And the bill includes a maintenance-of-effort requirement to help make sure states are adequately funding their schools.

The Every Student Succeeds Act also eliminates No Child Left Behind's federal accountability system and directs states to design systems for identifying schools in need of additional support. Importantly, the bill puts in place meaningful requirements for the accountability systems designed by states, including a requirement that state systems give substantial consideration to academic achievement and trigger action in any school where subgroups of students are underperforming. In this way, the Every Student Succeeds Act remains true to the civil rights legacy of the original Elementary and Secondary Education Act. The law will continue to require states to identify achievement gaps between groups of students and target resources to schools that need more support to close achievement gaps.

Importantly, the bill also reduces testing and the high stakes associated with statewide exams. The bill requires states to evaluate schools using multiple measures of student learning, so schools will not be held accountable for test scores alone. Additionally, the Every Student Succeeds Act establishes a pilot program for some states to develop alternative assessment systems. I am particularly pleased that the bill includes language from the Support Making Assessments Reliable and Timely (SMART) Act, bipartisan legislation I authored to help reduce testing. This provision gives resources to districts to eliminate the unnecessary or duplicative assessments that proliferated under No Child Left Behind. This provision also helps districts make better use of assessments by speeding the delivery of assessment results to educators, students, and families and by giving educators more time to plan in response to assessment data.

The Every Student Succeeds Act includes support for well-rounded education. I worked to include a provision in this section to make clear that schools can use federal resources to integrate arts and music into STEM courses. STEAM education, which combines arts and music with STEM subjects, educates both halves of students' brains; it teaches them to think creatively while they develop technical skills. Highly-skilled students who are also able to develop one-of-a-kind solutions to problems will excel in an economy that values innovation.

Overall, the Every Student Succeeds Act strengthens our nation's system of public education. The bill correctly recognizes that teach-

ers and principals are skilled professionals who know what is best for their students. At the same time, the bill puts in place common-sense requirements to improve achievement among students who have historically been underserved by public education. In other words, the bill strikes the appropriate balance of returning decision making to states and local communities without diluting the federal government's role in upholding our country's promise to deliver equal educational opportunities and outcomes to all students.

I would like to thank Chairman KLINE, Ranking Member SCOTT, Chairman ALEXANDER, and Ranking Member MURRAY for their tremendous leadership on this bill. The Every Student Succeeds Act is moving forward with strong bipartisan, bicameral support because these leaders were willing to find common ground for the good of our country's students and educators.

I have visited schools throughout my district and spoken with educators and students in urban and rural communities. In each community I visit, I am reminded of the urgency of efforts to end the test-and-punish culture created by No Child Left Behind. It is a great honor to be able to support the Every Student Succeeds Act to chart a better path forward for our country's educators and students. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in supporting the bill.

RECOGNIZING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF DANIEL PEARSON TO THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE, SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

HON. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the service of a valued staff member of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology, Doctor Daniel Pearson. Dr. Pearson has served on Capitol Hill for the past quarter century, most recently as the Minority Staff Director for the Oversight Subcommittee.

Dr. Pearson came to the Committee with a PhD in Political Science from the University of Washington and a keen interest in public service. His commitment has always been to good public policy and integrity in government rather than simply partisan politics. That commitment is exemplified by the fact that he has worked effectively for both Republican and Democratic Members of Congress over his congressional career.

In the early 1990s, Dr. Pearson led investigations and oversight activities for Congressman Sherry Boehlert (R-NY). He also worked for former Committee Chairman George Brown (D-CA), Democratic Ranking Member Ralph Hall, and former Chairman Bart Gordon prior to becoming Minority staff director for the

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Oversight Subcommittee after I became Ranking Member in 2011.

Because of the wide-ranging oversight jurisdiction of the Committee, Dr. Pearson has been involved in investigating multiple federal agencies, from the Department of Energy to the Department of Homeland Security, Environmental Protection Agency, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Science Foundation, and the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, covering a broad array of science and technology issues. He leaves behind a legacy of helping to reign in waste, fraud, abuse and mismanagement throughout the federal government dating back to the Science Committee's investigation of environmental crimes at the Rocky Flats nuclear weapons plant.

Dr. Pearson's oversight efforts have helped to uncover mismanagement of federal resources, projects and programs. He helped to re-open a network of key EPA regional libraries that had been inexplicably closed. He investigated the Veterans Administration's inappropriate destruction of an irreplaceable collection of biological samples, including the legionella bacteria that causes Legionnaires disease. He managed an investigation into an important Department of Homeland Security (DHS) laboratory called the Environmental Measurements Laboratory (EML) that revealed the DHS Science & Technology Directorate had intended to close this crucial lab without informing Congress. Dr. Pearson's efforts resulted in saving this lab from closure. His oversight efforts also resulted in the withdrawal of federal funding from a technically troubled and poorly managed aerospace project called the DP-2. His investigation of the mishandling of a critical radioactive isotope, Helium-3, used for the identification and detection of dangerous radioactive material, helped put management of that program back on track.

Dr. Pearson's oversight work on scientific integrity and public health resulted in several investigations of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) including its sister agency the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR). These investigations led to the public disclosure of a flawed public health report on the potentially toxic levels of formaldehyde in trailers provided to survivors of Hurricane Katrina and Rita by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) and a flawed CDC report on the levels of lead-in-water in Washington, D.C. In that instance, the Committee's investigation prompted an internal CDC investigation of its Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Branch and the agency issued two separate formal notifications correcting its public health study.

In his investigatory and oversight role, Dr. Pearson has been a tireless advocate for people who would otherwise have been left behind by the government. There is no better example of this determination than the work Dan did on behalf of the families of Marines at Camp Lejeune, who we came to learn became sick because of a polluted water supply. It was the kind of staff work that should be admired and copied.

Dr. Pearson has always believed strongly in the institutional oversight authority vested in Congress and the need to investigate alleged wrongdoing by those tasked with overseeing federal agencies. His nonpartisan oversight efforts in this regard contributed to the removal

of three federal Inspector Generals (IGs) from office over the years, one at the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and two at the Department of Commerce.

Throughout all of these investigations and oversight activities, Dr. Pearson demonstrated the patience and endurance to keep after wrongdoers in the federal government for months and even years if necessary. Doing investigatory work for a House committee can be thankless task at times, but Dr. Pearson was always willing to do what was necessary to carry out his oversight responsibilities.

In sum, Dr. Pearson has been a critically important member of the Committee staff. He has been passionate about the issues he has worked on, committed to excellence, and a thoughtful mentor to new staff members. I will miss him and dedicated service to the Committee. At the same time, Congress's loss will be his family's gain, and I know that his wife Neddie and his daughter Nora are looking forward to their time together with him in Oregon.

I want to thank him for his selfless professionalism and wish him all the best for the next phase of his life.

RECOGNIZING COUNCILMAN SCOTT KINCAID FOR OVER THIRTY YEARS OF PUBLIC SERVICE

HON. DANIEL T. KILDEE

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I ask the United States House of Representatives to join me in recognizing Flint City Councilman Scott Kincaid for his commitment to the city and for the years he has served as a public servant.

Born in Flint, MI in 1952, Councilman Kincaid has been committed to his hometown most of his life. In 1970, he graduated from Flint Southwestern. After graduation, Councilman Kincaid's strong sense of civic duty led him to serve in the United States Army.

Following his time in the service, Councilman Kincaid worked for GM Fisher and was heavily involved with the UAW. He served on the Executive Board, was the Education Director, and was appointed the Joint Activity Representative for Local 581. By 2003, he was working as the Government Liaison to assist with new plant investments. He is currently the Health Initiatives Coordinator for Region 1C Flint.

In 1985, Councilman Kincaid was first elected to the Flint City Council. He has from that day forward served the City of Flint to the best of his abilities. Councilman Kincaid served as Council President more than once over his tenure with the city.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the work and commitment of Councilman Kincaid. It is the dedication of people like him that keeps this city strong.

COMMEMORATING THE RETIREMENT OF DR. WILLIAM E. "BRIT" KIRWAN

HON. JOHN P. SARBANES

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. SARBANES. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor Dr. William "Brit" Kirwan, who has been a leader in the State of Maryland and in higher education for more than 50 years.

President John F. Kennedy once said, "Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other." Well, I can tell you that Dr. Kirwan's commitment to leadership and learning over these last 50 years have been indispensable not only to one another, but to higher education in Maryland and across the nation. Leading with integrity and purpose, Dr. Kirwan has earned the trust and respect of faculty, students and other leaders of higher education all over the country.

Throughout his career, Dr. Kirwan has been committed to something he has described as "constructive leadership"—which involves becoming a leader not through division and power, but through unity and service. He has embodied this philosophy at College Park, serving as chancellor of the University System of Maryland for more than 12 years, as president of the University of Maryland for 10 years and as a member of the University's faculty for 24 years.

Dr. Kirwan has also taken his service and expertise beyond College Park, chairing the National Research Council Board of Higher Education and co-chairing the Knight Commission on Intercollegiate Athletics. He also serves on the boards of more than five organizations—including the University of Maryland School of Medicine, Maryland Chamber of Commerce, Greater Baltimore Committee, Economic Alliance of Greater Baltimore and Maryland Business Roundtable for Education. And he belongs to more than four honorary and professional societies—including Phi Beta Kappa, Phi Kappa Phi, the American Mathematical Society and the Mathematical Association of America.

These efforts have not gone unnoticed. Dr. Kirwan is the recipient of one of the nation's highest honors in higher education—the TIAA-CREF Theodore M. Hesburgh Award for Leadership Excellence. His invaluable leadership and his commitment to higher education in our state have also been recognized by several Maryland-based government, academic and business organizations.

But perhaps the legacy of Dr. Kirwan's service over these last 50 years is best conveyed in his own words. In a speech delivered to Phi Beta Kappa inductees in 2004, Dr. Kirwan said, "Our nation is in dire need of a new generation of enlightened leadership . . . highly educated, wise leaders who have respect for the individual, for inclusiveness, integrity and the common good." He continued, ". . . our nation and world face a distressing array of enormous challenges, which—without enlightened leadership—will only worsen in the coming years."

If the next generation embodies Dr. Kirwan's commitment to service and enlightened leadership, I am confident that it will successfully take on the world's complex challenges.