

dangerous precedent by permanently undermining the Department of Education and all federal agencies.

ESSA was passed in December of 2015 with overwhelming bipartisan and bicameral support, and H.J. Res. 57 is a political power play that would undo enforcement of key equity protections in this bipartisan civil rights law.

States are currently drafting plans to implement this very regulation.

ESSA affords states and districts unprecedented flexibility.

H.J. Res. 57 would pull the rug out from under states and districts that are working hard to ensure the civil rights legacy of the law, leaving them without the clarity and direction needed to fully use new flexibilities and meet federal requirements.

H.J. Res. 57 strikes at the heart of ESSA. Blocking implementation and reregulation of ESSA's core requirements in accountability, state plans, and data and reporting will leave States in limbo and jeopardize protections for vulnerable students that Democrats championed in reauthorization.

If unhappy with the final rule, the Trump Administration should use administrative tools at its disposal to amend and revise the regulation.

Use of CRA is a political gimmick that harms students, teachers, and taxpayers.

I urge you to oppose this Republican scare tactic of a bill.

CONGRATULATING THE HON. MP
VIAN DAKHIL ON RECEIVING
THE 2016 LANTOS HUMAN RIGHTS
PRIZE

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, February 9, 2017

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise to congratulate the Honorable MP Vian Dakhil on receiving the 2016 Lantos Human Rights Prize. I was very appreciative of the Lantos Foundation for inviting me to participate in today's ceremony conferring the award. For decades, Congressman Tom Lantos championed human rights in the U.S. House of Representatives, and I was very privileged to have served alongside him. Today, the Commission and the Foundation that bear his name continue his vital work, fighting for human dignity for all people.

MP Dakhil first captured the world's attention in August 2014 as she pleaded with the Iraqi parliament to help her people, the Yazidi, besieged on Mount Sinjar. Since then, she has spent the last two and a half years rescuing girls and young women enslaved by the Islamic State, coordinating rescue missions into ISIS territory to bring girls and women out of bondage. Even as she continues to represent her people in the Iraqi parliament, she works tirelessly to support survivors and children orphaned by the genocide. In taking a stand for the Yazidi people, MP Dakhil has embodied the very definition of heroism. Her bravery and moral clarity make her as fitting a recipient of the 2016 Lantos Human Rights Prize as any I can think of.

The Yazidi people have suffered a grave injustice at the hands of the Islamic State. ISIS

has kidnapped and indoctrinated young boys into child soldiers. Thousands of men and women have been killed. Among the most savage of their crimes, the Islamic State has kidnapped thousands of Yazidi girls and women to sell on the market, creating a structured system of organized kidnapping, rape, and sexual slavery. The horrific nature of these crimes is beyond condemnation. Today, between 3,000–4,000 Yazidi women and girls are still held captive by ISIS, the “bleeding wound of Iraq,” as MP Dakhil describes.

As we gather here, we must recognize that the international community, the United States included, has in large part failed to act. We continue to fail to exercise our moral leadership to bring aid to those in need, even as crimes against humanity occur on a daily basis.

Just two weeks ago, the world observed International Holocaust Remembrance Day. Many of us have heard the affirmation of “never again” in relation to the Holocaust. When I think of the Yazidi people, and the Shabak, the Turkmen, Shias, Sunnis, Christians, the Rohingya, and the Darfuri, I ask myself if the true meaning of this proclamation is, in fact, losing its meaning. Each of us has a responsibility to fight against injustice no matter where we find it in the world.

In Congress, I have introduced H.R. 379, the Justice for Yazidis Act, a proposal that would establish and fund vital programming for the Yazidi people and other religious minorities. My bill establishes a healthcare and psychosocial support program that places an emphasis on providing trauma therapy for children and survivors of sexual slavery, as well as a psychologist, physical therapist, and social worker training program to provide training to psychologists and social workers who speak Kurmanji or the Shengali dialect of Kurmanji. MP Dakhil already works tirelessly to support these types of programs. The United States can, and should, do more to assist in these noble and just efforts.

Congressman Lantos used to say that: “the veneer of civilization is paper thin. We are its guardians. We can never rest.” I am proud to honor MP Dakhil as one of the world's guardians.

PROVIDING FOR CONGRESSIONAL
DISAPPROVAL OF RULE SUB-
MITTED BY DEPARTMENT OF
EDUCATION RELATING TO
TEACHER PREPARATION ISSUES

SPEECH OF

HON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, February 7, 2017

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to H.J. Res. 58, the Congressional Review Act (CRA) Resolution for Disapproval of the Rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to Teacher Preparation Issues, because the regulation Republicans seek to rescind will have the effect of reducing educational opportunities in student achievement, quality of instruction, college readiness and other important outcomes.

Teaching is a very noble profession that shapes the character, caliber, and future of an

individual and for many of our nation's children, a teacher affects eternity; he or she can never tell where his influence stops.

Teachers cannot however succeed in shaping the lives of our children if we as a society fail to equip them with the tools necessary to master and hone the craft they pass along to our youth.

This joint resolution would nullify the Teacher Preparation Issues rule finalized by the Department of Education on October 31, 2016, tying the hands of any and all future administrations in improving the transparency and quality of teacher preparation programs until the Higher Education Act (HEA) is successfully reauthorized.

The Teacher Preparation Issues rule established indicators that States must use to report on teacher preparation program performance, to help ensure that the quality of teacher preparation programs is judged on reliable and valid indicators of program performance.

Section 205 of the HEA requires States and institutions of higher education (IHEs) annually to report on various characteristics of their teacher preparation programs, including an assessment of program performance.

Under the rule that this menacing legislation would obliterate requirements in the collection and dissemination of more meaningful data on teacher preparation program quality.

These reporting requirements exist in part to ensure that members of the public, prospective teachers and employers (districts and schools), and the States, IHEs, and programs themselves have accurate information on the quality of these teacher preparation programs.

These requirements also provide an impetus to States and IHEs to make improvements where they are needed.

The Department's existing title II reporting system framework has not, however, ensured sufficient quality feedback to various stakeholders on program performance.

A U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) report found that some States are not assessing whether teacher preparation programs are low-performing, as required by law, and so prospective teachers may have difficulty identifying low-performing teacher preparation programs, possibly resulting in teachers who are not fully prepared to educate children.

In addition, struggling teacher preparation programs may not receive the technical assistance they need and, like the teaching candidates themselves, school districts, and other stakeholders, will not be able to make informed decisions.

The final regulations also link assessments of program performance under HEA title II to eligibility for the Federal TEACH Grant program.

The TEACH Grant program, authorized by the HEA, provides grants to eligible IHEs, which, in turn, use the funds to provide grants of up to \$4,000 annually to eligible teacher preparation candidates who agree to serve as full-time teachers in high-need fields at low-income schools for not less than four academic years within eight years after completing their courses of study.

Thousands of novice teachers enter the profession every year and their students deserve to have well-prepared teachers.

Current educational policy is committed to ensuring that the measures by which States judge the quality of teacher preparation programs reflect the true quality of the programs

and provide information that facilitates program improvement and, by extension, improvement in student achievement.

H.J. Res. 58 is just another step in Republicans' plan to dismantle the oversight and enforcement authority of the Department of Education and undermine public education.

H.J. Res. 58 flies in the face of Congressional intent, removing any sense of transparency related to teacher preparation program quality, and leaving these important equity provisions without checks and balances indefinitely.

H.J. Res 58 would ensure that there are no serious attempts to improve the quality of teacher preparation programs, since the CRA prevents future Departments of Education from regulating on a similar issue.

If unhappy with the final rule, the Trump Administration should use administrative tools at its disposal to amend and revise the regulation. Use of CRA is a political gimmick that harms students, teachers, and taxpayers.

Republicans want blanket deregulation of federal education programs in an attempt to stall implementation of equity-focused provisions and allow states and districts the ulti-

mate flexibility to ignore laws and federal requirements intended to protect disadvantaged students.

The CRA has been used only once in Congressional history.

Using it to block regulatory action to improve teacher preparation program quality is extreme and a gross abuse of power.

When we fail our teachers, we rob our children of long fought for opportunities to expand their horizons in classrooms and achieve in life the hope we have vested in them for the future.

I urge you to oppose this bill.