
Protecting a Limited Federal Role in Education

THE PROBLEM

For years, one-size-fits-all federal policies made it difficult for state and local leaders to provide their students with a high-quality education. Under the Obama administration, the federal government's control over K-12 education only got worse. Through waivers and pet projects, the Obama Department of Education increased the federal role in America's classrooms, micromanaging decisions best left to parents and state and local education leaders.

Fortunately, Congress replaced the Washington-knows-best approach to K-12 education with the *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA). Signed into law in December 2015, the law was intended to empower parents, reduce the federal role, and restore local control. Unfortunately, the Obama administration used the law as a vehicle to push its flawed education agenda.

In November 2016, the Department of Education finalized a rule implementing accountability provisions in ESSA. The law empowers states to develop systems for holding schools accountable to parents and taxpayers and specifically limits the Secretary of Education's ability to create new requirements for those state accountability systems. However, the department's rule dictates prescriptive accountability requirements and violates the law's prohibitions on the secretary's authority.

Additionally, in October 2016, the department finalized a rule under the *Higher Education Act* that unilaterally increases federal control in education. The regulation dictates specific requirements states must use to determine the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs. Yet another example of executive overreach, the rule significantly expands the federal government's involvement in teacher preparation and may lead to fewer teachers serving some of our nation's most vulnerable children.

THE SOLUTION

To rein in federal control over education, leaders of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce introduced resolutions invoking Congress's powers to prevent these harmful rules from taking effect. Introduced by K-12 subcommittee chairman Rep. Todd Rokita (R-IN), H. J. Res. 57 would roll back the Obama administration's heavy-handed accountability regulation. Additionally, Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY), chair of the higher education subcommittee, introduced H. J. Res. 58 to block implementation of the final teacher preparation regulation. Both congressional resolutions have been introduced pursuant to the *Congressional Review Act* and will:

- ✓ **Rein in the federal role in education** and help maintain local control;
- ✓ **Protect America's students and teachers** from executive overreach; and
- ✓ **Provide state and local education leaders flexibility** to deliver every child a high-quality education.