



ADVANCING FAITH, FAMILY AND FREEDOM

February 26, 2015

Representative
House of Representatives
Washington D.C. 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the Family Research Council (FRC), and the families we represent, I want to urge you to support the Student Success Act (H.R. 5) because of several key provisions that would improve federal law involving education policy. The bill does not grant states and parents total control over student's educational decisions, however, it contains reforms and provisions worthy of support. While FRC will not score votes on H.R. 5, we support the bill as it contains key provisions that enhance local control over education.

First, we strongly support inclusion of Rep. Randy Neugebauer's Protecting Life in Funding Education (PRO-LIFE) amendment in the manager's amendment. This amendment prohibits federal funds from going to state or local educational agencies that contract with school-based health centers that perform or refer for abortion. This is necessary as reports have shown that public high schools in states such as California, Oregon, New Jersey and New York have contracted with abortion providers such as Planned Parenthood to help coordinate on-campus health services for students. According to their 2013-2014 annual report, Planned Parenthood performed 327,653 abortions and yet only 1,180 adoption referrals. This should not be the taxpayer funded message to public high school students, nor should federal dollars be spent to advocate for abortion under the guise of health care.

Further, H.R. 5 contains a provision to prevent the Obama Administration's coercion of states into adopting Common Core and other top-down education standards through Race to the Top grants, waivers and other mandates. The Department of Education had begun conditioning certain waivers from onerous education requirements on state's acceptance of Common Core. H.R. 5 contains a crucial provision to remove the Common Core mandates and would thereby preserve the flexibility and innovative decision making that is best implemented at state and local level by the parents and educators closest to students.

H.R. 5 also contains provisions that would prohibit funding for education aimed at teens that promotes or normalizes sexual activity as an expected behavior. We do not believe students should be taught risky behaviors. Indeed, a 2010 Health and Human Services study showed that the vast majority parents and students believe students should receive abstinence education. While this bill does not fund any new abstinence education programs, it does prevent federal education dollars from being used to normalize risky behavior.

FRC also supports the fact that H.R. 5 retains provisions in current law that prevents it from being applied to homeschools or private schools that do not receive federal funds. This protects these

private educational programs from federal mandates and control, leaving schools and parents to decide best how to education their students.

Last, we support the amendment offered by Rep. Bill Flores (R-TX) to provide a sense of Congress that religious liberty should be protected within education. This is an important message Congress can send to protect our First Amendment freedoms, including in the space of our education.

For these reasons, again, we support this bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "David Christensen".

David Christensen
Vice President for Government Affairs