



**CONSORTIUM FOR CITIZENS  
WITH DISABILITIES**

July 8, 2015

Dear Representative,

The undersigned organizations of the Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities (CCD) write to voice our significant concerns regarding *The Student Success Act* (H.R. 5) and to urge you not to support the bill as currently written.

CCD is pleased that after the Committee mark up, some progress was made to include new language that improves data transparency as well as assuring parents understand the implications of Alternate Assessments on Alternate Achievement standards including that students are not precluded from attempting to complete requirements for a regular diploma. We believe that these improvements, in combination with the provisions in HR 5 that we have previously mentioned as positive such as – annual, statewide assessments in grades 3-8 and once in high school; disaggregation of data by student categories; the 95% student participation rate for all students as well as for student subgroups in annual assessments; and the use of universal design for learning principles in assessment design – are all incredibly important. However, in total, the bill just does not go far enough.

As advocates for the six million students with disabilities attending public school across the U.S., CCD strongly urges the House of Representatives to work in a bipartisan fashion to craft legislation that continues to provide meaningful access to rigorous standards for all students and to fully include students with disabilities in every local school. Any bill to reauthorize ESEA must at least include the following:

- 1) Limit the use of Alternate Assessments based on Alternate Achievement Standards to 1% of all students assessed, by grade and by subject;
- 2) Ensure that parents are involved in the decision that their child will take an Alternate Assessment on an Alternate Achievement standard;
- 3) Ensure that students with disabilities, including students that take the Alternate Assessment on Alternate Achievement standards have continued access to the general education curriculum and are not precluded from earning a regular high school diploma;
- 4) Require states to set performance targets in reading and math and graduation goals and assure that when not met, state and district designed interventions are triggered to support the increased learning for the groups of students not making state-set gains;
- 5) Prohibit the use of restraint and seclusion in non-emergencies that do not threaten physical safety;
- 6) Prohibit the elimination of maintenance of effort provisions.

We hope you will give further consideration to the important provisions that we know will help ensure that students with disabilities are held to high standards and have excellent teachers in settings where they are most likely to succeed. We know you share our goal to see that every student has the opportunity to achieve to high standards and be prepared for post-secondary education and careers.

We would be happy to provide more details on our goals or answer any questions.

Sincerely,

American Association on Health and Disability

ACCSES

American Dance Therapy Association

American Foundation for the Blind

American Music Therapy Association

American Network of Community Options and Resources

APSE

Association of University Centers on Disabilities

Autism National Committee

Autistic Self-Advocacy Network

Autism Society of America

Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law

Brain Injury Association of America

Conference of Educational Administrators of Schools and Programs for the Deaf

Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates

Council for Learning Disabilities

Disability Rights Education and Defense Fund

Easter Seals

Epilepsy Foundation

Higher Education Consortium for Special Education

Institute for Educational Leadership

Mental Health America

National Association of Councils on Developmental Disabilities

National Association of School Psychologists

National Association of State Directors of Special Education

National Association of State Head Injury Administrators

National Center for Learning Disabilities

National Council for Independent Living

National Disability Rights Network

National Down Syndrome Congress

National Respite Coalition

Parent 2 Parent USA

Perkins

School Social Work Association of America

TASH

Teacher Education Division of Council for Exceptional Children

The Advocacy Institute

The Arc  
The Jewish Federations of North America  
The National Center for Special Education in Charter Schools  
United Cerebral Palsy  
United Spinal

The Consortium for Citizens with Disabilities is a coalition of national consumer, advocacy, provider and professional organizations headquartered in Washington, D.C. Since 1973, the CCD has advocated on behalf of people of all ages with physical and mental disabilities and their families. CCD has worked to achieve federal legislation and regulations that assure that the 54 million children and adults with disabilities are fully integrated into the mainstream of society. For additional information, please contact:

Eileen Dombrowski, Easter Seals	202.347.3066	edombrowski@easterseals.com
Lindsay E. Jones, National Center for Learning Disabilities	202.628.2662	ljones@ncld.org
Laura Kaloi, Council of Parent Attorneys and Advocates	202.349.2310	lkaloi@wpllc.net
Kim Musheno, Association of University Centers on Disabilities	301.588.8252	kmusheno@aucd.org
Cindy Smith, Natl. Assoc. of Councils on Developmental Disabilities	202-506-5813	csmith@nacdd.org