



February 25, 2015

The Honorable Mark Walker
United States House of Representatives
312 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Walker:

On behalf of the members of National Taxpayers Union (NTU), I write in support of your “Academic Partnerships Lead Us to Success Act,” or A-PLUS, amendment to H.R. 5, the Student Success Act. This amendment would substantially increase the flexibility of states and local communities to meet the unique educational goals and challenges of their constituents by allowing states to opt-out of “No Child Left Behind” (NCLB).

Decades of “one-size-fits-all” top-down federal control have proven unworkable and disadvantaged U.S. students relative to their global peers. What began under President Johnson in the “Elementary and Secondary Education Act” as an effort to help mitigate disparities between school districts and states has ballooned into a bureaucratic morass of overlapping programs and burdensome mandates under the current NCLB regime. According to the Office of Management and Budget, annual NCLB compliance by states requires almost 7 million hours of paperwork at a cost of \$141 million. This is a high price to pay with little to show for it.

A-PLUS would restore state and local control of education, as intended by the Tenth Amendment, giving states and communities the opportunity to innovate. A-PLUS would implement a commonsense framework for doing so while maintaining a high degree of accountability and transparency. Federal funds would be block-granted to states to disperse as they see fit, empowering local jurisdictions to undertake their own educational priorities. The legislation would save funds at both the federal and local levels by eliminating wasteful and ineffective programs and reducing the administrative burden of NCLB.

NTU is pleased to endorse your A-PLUS amendment. We urge the House Rules Committee to deem this amendment in order and encourage all Representatives to support its adoption.

Sincerely,

Nan Swift
Federal Affairs Manager