

Chairman INHOFE, Senator BOXER, and a bipartisan group of Senators are working out the final language. I want to thank them for their efforts, and I hope we will find a way to go forward on a multiyear, paid-for highway bill.

#### RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Democratic leader is recognized.

#### A COOPERATIVE MINORITY

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I commend Senators MURRAY and ALEXANDER for their good work on this education bill. But I want the record to be spread with this. The bill is passing this Congress because we have had a constructive minority during this Congress.

Senator Harkin, who was chair of that committee, had indicated—and I said this on the Record last week—that on two separate occasions they reported the bill out of the education committee, but it was filibustered and never got to the floor.

So I understand why my friend the Republican leader is beating his chest about how great the Senate works, because it does work if you have a cooperative minority, and that is what we have done. We have worked very hard to try to get this done, and as a result of our work together, we have been able to get it done. But please save everyone the lack of history. My friend keeps bringing up: Boy, the Senate is working so well. It is very cynical what my friends did in stopping everything for the last 4 years. They stopped everything. Hundreds of times they stopped bills from moving to the floor. So my friend comes to the floor and says: Oh man, things are working so great now. Isn't it great the Senate is working?

Cynical as it was, the Republicans had a plan, and that was to oppose everything. We had a Democratic President, we had a Democratic Senate, and if they opposed everything, it would work out great for them, and it did. It wasn't good for the country, but they are now in the majority. Now, how long they stay there remains to be seen.

If you look at the poll numbers about how well my friend is doing, the Republican leader is not doing very well, with the lowest numbers since they started doing polling on leaders—Democratic or Republican leaders.

So we will continue to cooperate when we can. The highway bill is coming up, and I hope we can work together to get something done on that. It is something that is long overdue. We have tried to get that done in the past, but we had Republican objections on everything we tried.

We have had 33 short-term extensions on the highway bill—33. We used to do them as a matter of routine every 5 years. But that isn't the way it is any longer. But we are going to cooperate as much as we can on the highway bill and everything else.

#### EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mr. REID. Mr. President, prior to leaving the floor, I want to talk about another subject that is extremely important.

One of the sad things that has happened the last few months is that Republicans have brought to a standstill—and that is even an understatement to say that—the Export-Import Bank. It is now gone. Legislation was not passed. So something we have always done in the past routinely—reauthorized this bill—we have not done so this time. The Republicans have stopped it. It is gone. The Export-Import Bank is gone.

Our ability to sell to other countries our products has been seriously overwhelmed. It is so sad. And it really is sad. Other countries have these export-import banks. There is some mindset from my Republican friends that we can't do anything that government is involved in. But if we are going to be competitive in the world, we have to have a program such as the Export-Import Bank. It has been around for a long time and has been very successful. If we don't do this, for example, the airplanes we build in the State of Washington will actually come to a screeching halt. They can sell to America but not to other countries.

Now, am I making all this up? No. In fact, other countries have these banks. Is it one or two countries? No, it is scores of countries—scores of countries. I will take a minute or two to read the names of the countries that have working export-import banks to help their businesses and workers compete globally: Argentina, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Barbados, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, China, Hong Kong, Colombia, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Luxembourg, Malaysia, Mexico, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Poland, Portugal, Russia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, South Korea, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, Uzbekistan.

Every one of these countries has a working export-import bank. Why do they have them? Because they want to be competitive. Whatever they are able to sell to a foreign country—whether a bag of wheat or some kind of product they manufacture—they want to be able to help their local businesses sell to foreign countries—but not the United States. And we are really hurting.

I can't imagine—I can't imagine—how the Republicans, whose support for business-oriented operations—we thought over the years their interest was in helping business—has just turned a blind eye. They are not interested in helping business any more. Why? Because these working Export-Import Banks are government operations. Does it cost the Federal Government of the United States money?

Of course not. We have received \$7 billion back in rewards that goes to our Treasury. We make money on the deal.

So I would say to my friend who believes the Senate is working well, I wish somebody would say to my Republican friends, you know, every small business organization supports the Export-Import Bank. The chamber of commerce is not an organization that is out beating the drums for Democrats, but they are running ads all over America saying: Republicans, do something about this. Huge companies like Boeing—there are hundreds of thousands of jobs at Boeing—are dependent on being able to export those big airplanes.

As a result of Republicans' nonaction and not reauthorizing this important piece of legislation—before this collapse of the Bank took place, there were 165,000 Americans working in jobs related to the Export-Import Bank. I don't know how many there are today, but I guarantee there are not 165,000. Each day that goes by, others lose their jobs. Little companies from the State of Nevada are calling me and saying: We have to have this. We are going to go out of business.

The bad feeling my Republican friends have for anything dealing with the government so that they do stuff like this—it is hard to explain to anybody why they would do something like this.

Every one of these countries has programs. I have read their names into the RECORD. I think it is just a shame what has happened with this wonderful institution that is so good for creating jobs for America.

If the Presiding Officer would announce the business of the day.

#### RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

#### EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of S. 1177, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1177) to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

Pending:

Alexander/Murray amendment No. 2089, in the nature of a substitute.

Murray (for Peters) amendment No. 2095 (to amendment No. 2089), to allow local educational agencies to use parent and family engagement funds for financial literacy activities.

Murray (for Coons/Rubio) amendment No. 2243 (to amendment No. 2089), to authorize the establishment of American Dream Accounts.

Alexander (for Cruz/Lee) amendment No. 2180 (to amendment No. 2089), to provide for State-determined assessment and accountability systems.

Alexander (for Hatch/Bennet) amendment No. 2082 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 relating to early learning.

Murray (for Warren) amendment No. 2106 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend title II of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to include specialized instructional support personnel in the literacy development of children.

Alexander (for Burr/Bennet) modified amendment No. 2247 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend the allocation of funds under subpart 2 of part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

Murray (for Murphy) amendment No. 2186 (to amendment No. 2089), to establish the Promise Neighborhoods program.

Murray (for Brown/Manchin) amendment No. 2100 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend title V of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to establish a full-service community schools grant program.

Murray (for Sanders) amendment No. 2177 (to amendment No. 2089), to provide for youth jobs.

Murray (for Casey) amendment No. 2242 (to amendment No. 2089), to establish a Federal-State partnership to provide access to high-quality public prekindergarten programs from low-income and moderate-income families to ensure that they enter kindergarten prepared for success.

Murray (for Schatz) amendment No. 2130 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend title I to support assessments of school facilities.

Murray (for Nelson) modified amendment No. 2215 (to amendment No. 2089), to include partnering with current and recently retired STEM professionals and tailoring educational resources to engage students and teachers in STEM.

Murray (for Manchin/Ayotte) amendment No. 2222 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend the State plan requirements of section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 in order to support children facing substance abuse in the home.

Alexander (for Boozman/Gillibrand) amendment No. 2231 (to amendment No. 2089), to support professional development to help students prepare for postsecondary education and the workforce.

Murray (for Baldwin/Whitehouse) amendment No. 2188 (to amendment No. 2089), to ensure States will ensure the unique needs of students at all levels of schooling.

Alexander (for Capito/Durbin) amendment No. 2156 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend the State report card under section 1111 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to include the rates of enrollment in postsecondary education, and remediation rates, for high schools.

Alexander (for Thune) amendment No. 2232 (to amendment No. 2089), to allow extended services Project SERV grants under part A of title IV of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to be available for violence prevention activities.

Murray (for King/Capito) amendment No. 2256 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend the definitions of eligible technology and technology readiness survey and to provide a restriction on funds.

Murray (for Schatz) amendment No. 2240 (to amendment No. 2089), to provide resources needed to study and review Native American language medium schools and programs.

Murray (for Warren/Gardner) amendment No. 2249 (to amendment No. 2089), to amend section 1111(c) of the ESEA to require States to provide an assurance regarding cross-tabulation of student data.

Mr. REID. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Ms. AYOTTE. Mr. President, I come to the floor this morning to speak about the bill that we have pending on the floor, a law that is long past due for reexamination and reauthorization, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act.

This law was last updated in 2001 as the No Child Left Behind Act. Fourteen years is far too long to go without updating the primary law focused on an issue that is so important to the future of our country, ensuring that children in New Hampshire and across this country receive a high-quality education.

I am the mother of a 7-year-old and 10-year-old, and this could not be a more important issue to me and to, I know, other mothers across the country. Many parents, teachers, and school leaders in New Hampshire have expressed to me their concerns about No Child Left Behind, and so it is past time for us to update and improve this law.

I believe education decisions are best made locally, including decisions about school curriculum and how education dollars are spent. While its goals of accountability were very important and laudable, No Child Left Behind, unfortunately, imposed a one-size-fits-all regime on every school in every State in this country.

No Child Left Behind imposed unworkable mandates and unreasonable goals that led many schools in America to be labeled as failing, with no reasonable way to get off the failing list. Congress's inaction, up to this point has led to a system where the Federal Secretary of Education can dictate to States what priorities they must set in order to receive a conditional waiver from parts of this law.

This Senate's bipartisan education reform bill, the Every Child Achieves Act that is on the floor right now, would return decisionmaking on education to where it belongs, back to States, local schools, teachers, and parents.

I wish to thank Chairman ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MURRAY of the HELP Committee for conducting an open debate on this critically important legislation and working together. I am encouraged that Republicans and Democrats worked together and overcame disagreements to move this important legislation forward. That is how the Senate should work and that is what the American people deserve from their elected representatives.

Like all Granite Staters, I want children in our State and across our country to have even better opportunities

than our generation has had, and the foundation for future success starts with a quality education. Every parent knows that, and that is why this is such an important topic that we have been debating on this floor.

Granite Staters have shared with me some of the biggest challenges facing our students because of No Child Left Behind, and the Every Child Achieves Act seeks to address them. For example, as I mentioned, No Child Left Behind created a one-size-fits-all system that ignored differences between different parts of the country and primarily used tests as the measure of accountability at the expense of other important measures of success, such as student progress, attendance and graduation rates, parent and teacher engagement, among others.

We have seen what happened under this law over the last decade. Schools are overtesting and educators are teaching for the test as opposed to making sure our children really learn the topic matter. That is not how we should be educating our young people. We want to make sure they have a firm understanding of the concepts they are learning in school.

The Every Child Achieves Act restores these powers to the States. It makes sure States have the flexibility they need to develop their own ways to test and measure accountability. I know from our local communities and our local school boards that they are focused every single day in their own communities on making sure their communities are delivering the best quality education and understand the geography and the different challenges facing their communities, and it is important we restore that decision-making to them.

This bill will let States decide how to measure student achievement and school success within their own borders. What might be right and work for North Dakota may not be the right approach for a State like New Hampshire, and so this allows each State and locality to engage on what is best for the State.

The Every Child Achieves Act also prohibits Washington from mandating or incentivizing any States to adopt any particular curriculum standards, such as common core. This is an issue many of my constituents have raised with me, and so this bill will, again, restore this decisionmaking to the States and the parents and teachers. In doing so, this bill reaffirms that it should be the State, not the Federal Government, that determines education standards. Each State is different and uniquely situated to determine the curriculum and accountability measures that best fit the needs of their students without interference from Washington. We don't need the Washington-knows-best attitude. We know the best decisions are made locally.

This bill includes additional reforms that will help strengthen our education system and better prepare our young

people to join the rapidly changing and competitive global 21st century workforce. It ensures parents can still have access to data about their State, district, and school's education performance so they can make informed decisions about their child's education. It increases support for high-quality charter schools, giving parents greater choice to determine the best learning environment for their children. It creates State-based need assessments to help identify low-performing schools and allows States, not the Federal Government, to determine how to best help low-performing schools.

All of these reforms are much needed, commonsense steps toward reforming and improving our education system, and I believe more can be done to specifically help students in New Hampshire. That is why I appreciate the willingness of Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY to work with me to allow votes on several bipartisan amendments that I have included in this bill, and I know this has been a very open process. This is how the Senate should operate.

I was able to work across the aisle on a number of amendments that addressed New Hampshire's priorities. The first of those is strengthening our mental health first aid training to ensure that school personnel have the critical mental health first aid training they need to improve the safety and well-being of students in schools in New Hampshire and across the country. This is something I have heard so much about from our local communities. That is why I was pleased to see the Senate adopted my amendment on mental health awareness training programs yesterday.

I wish to thank Senator BLUMENTHAL for working with me to include this important amendment that will help school personnel safely address mental health issues earlier, before they reach a crisis stage.

I know an issue I have heard so much about in New Hampshire about that 21st century workforce is STEM education. When it comes to developing the high-skilled workers we need to compete, we must ensure that we have better STEM education in our schools for that next generation of American innovators. Promoting education initiatives and job training in the areas of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics is critical to ensuring that we stay on the cutting edge and that we ensure that our children have the skills they need to get those good-paying jobs when they leave high school, postsecondary education, and beyond with their college education.

Over the last few years, an effort to increase students' proficiency and close the education gap between the United States and other countries has seen a renewed focus on STEM, and we have seen it in New Hampshire as well. One of the issues I have seen a focus on which I think is very important is including more women and girls in STEM education.

At the college level, women are currently studying in the STEM fields at a lower rate than men, and many women who do earn STEM degrees actually end up working in other fields. Despite that fact, we are expected to see a 20-percent increase in STEM jobs we are going to need to build that workforce. Yet women only make up 25 percent of the STEM workforce. So we have a long way to go, and that is one of the reasons I worked with Senator GILLIBRAND on a measure to broaden student access to mentorship, tutoring, and afterschool activities to encourage interest in and develop STEM skills. Our amendment was focused on encouraging States to explore ways to increase participation in STEM programs by underrepresented groups, including girls, minority students, English learners, students with disabilities, and low-income students, so we can have a broad array of our students ready to take on those jobs and the workforce we need to grow our economy.

Another area where we need to grow the economy in our country is in manufacturing. We are seeing the beginnings of a manufacturing renaissance. Last week, I was visiting a company in New Hampshire called Rapid Manufacturing in Nashua, NH. They have a partnership with a local community college to train their workforce and to bring them right from the community college into Rapid Manufacturing. They have more positions than they can fill right now. In fact, they are going into the middle schools and high schools to get kids excited about career and technical education. We really need this, and the jobs are there. I hear this from so many of our employers.

I was glad to work across the aisle on an important amendment that did not get included but got quite a bit of support from Senator KAINE and gained support from Senators PORTMAN, CAPITO, GRAHAM, BOXER, WHITEHOUSE, CASEY, and WARNER, and I wish to thank them.

This would create a pilot program in our middle schools to get our children excited about career and technical education for those advanced manufacturing jobs where we need to grow our workforce. While I am disappointed this amendment was not included on this bill, I am encouraged that Senator ALEXANDER said he would be open to working with us on this effort as a potential when we reauthorize the Perkins Act in the future, which will deal with higher education.

In addition to the issues we see with workforce, STEM, and manufacturing, unfortunately, an issue too many of our States are dealing with—and New Hampshire has been hit hard—is substance abuse. As part of my ongoing efforts to combat the heroin and prescription addiction crisis in New Hampshire, I worked with Senator MANCHIN to put forth two measures to better assist students dealing with substance abuse issues at home. Our amendment would encourage local education deci-

sionmakers to provide professional development, training, and technical assistance to schools and communities that are affected by the crisis of addiction, and this is something I know we are also going to address in an amendment I am supporting later today.

New Hampshire has been a leader in what is called competency-based education. What that means is actually assessing students on measures other than tests. That is actually measuring students on innovative assessments and measures of accountability; for example, when students actually go out into their community and have real hands-on experience based on the career they are focusing on. New Hampshire has been the first State in the Nation to actually receive a grant on competency-based education.

I was very glad to work with Senator KING to improve a section of this bill that would allow a greater ability for States to participate in alternative assessment pilot programs like we have seen in New Hampshire. This is, again, about transferring control from Washington of how we assess how our students are doing and how we ensure accountability in our schools to innovative local ideas like what we have seen in New Hampshire when it comes to competency-based education. So I want to thank Senator KING for working with me on that.

There are a number of other amendments for which I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and which I think are very important in this bill. I was very glad to work on them with my colleagues. They include working with Senator BOOKER on assisting homeless and foster youth; working with Senator WARNER on including language ensuring better transitions from school to the workplace; and working with Senator BENNET on supporting the use of shared service alliances for early childhood education programs. For example, in New Hampshire we have the Seacoast Early Learning Alliance. I was very glad to work with Senator BENNET on that amendment. Also, improving oversight of the Early Learning Alignment and Improvement Grants Program—oversight of our programs is critical. I was glad to work with Senator WARNER on oversight of these programs and, finally, work with Senator ISAKSON again on the local control piece, and that is putting the decisionmaking back with the parents. This amendment will better inform parents about their rights when it comes to mandatory assessments and the qualifications of their classroom teachers. I think we need to inform parents so that they can make the best decisions for their children.

I am confident that the bipartisan, commonsense reforms in the Every Child Achieves Act will improve our education system and certainly make sure that the decisionmaking rests where it should—with parents, teachers, local school boards, and our States, rather than the Washington

one-size-fits-all approach we have seen too often. In turn, it will help prepare students in New Hampshire and across our country for good careers and a brighter future. All of us here want to ensure that our children will have better opportunities than we have had in this great country, and we certainly owe that to our children. I am very glad we had this important debate on the floor.

Again, I thank Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY for working across the aisle on this important bill.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. ROUNDS). The Senator from Wyoming.

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### EPA RULE

Mr. BARRASSO. Mr. President, late last month, the Supreme Court issued a severe rebuke to the Obama administration and to his Environmental Protection Agency. It was a strong stand against Washington overreach.

The Environmental Protection Agency had written what it called the mercury and air toxics standards rule. The rule was a key part of the Obama administration's war on coal. The Supreme Court said that when Washington bureaucrats were writing this rule, they failed—the EPA failed—to consider the overwhelming costs they were imposing on hard-working American families. The Court said: "One would not say that it is even rational, never mind appropriate, to impose billions of dollars in economic costs in return for a few dollars in health and environmental benefits." It wasn't even rational, never mind appropriate. The Court's decision was exactly right, and many of us saw it as a big step forward in reining in this out-of-control Environmental Protection Agency.

Here is the problem. The rule came out in 2012, and the Supreme Court didn't make its ruling until 2015. That is 3 years. It is far too late for many Americans who work at coal plants and who have already been hurt by the EPA's ruling in 2012. That is because power companies were already having to comply with that rule while it made its way through the court process. They have already closed plants because of the rule, even though the Supreme Court now says that the rule was inappropriate, it was wrong. Now, unemployed workers won't get their jobs back now that the Court has ruled against the Obama administration. Because of these regulations, people are already paying higher electricity rates than they would have been paying otherwise. Consumers don't get their money back, either, now that the Supreme Court says the Environmental Protection Agency overstepped its authority.

This isn't the first time this Agency has gone beyond the law and beyond

what it is allowed to do. That is what it did when it put out its so-called waters of the United States rule. It is a recent rule—waters of the United States. It is a new regulation. The Agency wants to use it to greatly expand government control over the Nation's land and water. Farmers, ranchers, hard-working families would no longer be able to decide what to do with their own land. States, counties, and towns would no longer be able to decide what regulations will be best to protect the streams and the waters and the lakes within their borders. That is the problem. These decisions would now be made by Washington bureaucrats no matter what the cost, no matter how small the benefits or how large the cost.

Not only did the Agency increase its authority dramatically, it appears that it abused the rulemaking process to get the results the EPA wanted. What do I mean by that? Well, when Washington writes big, expensive regulations, it is supposed to have a public comment period so that people who might be harmed by the rules can have their say. According to news reports, when the EPA was writing the waters of the United States rule, the EPA twisted the public comment process into its own private, government-funded spin machine. This government agency ignored the negative comments by Americans who were actually concerned about the law and who were hurt by the law.

That is not what I am saying; that is what the New York Times said when it reported on the scandal back in May. The New York Times said that the EPA used taxpayer dollars to lobby liberal groups to flood the Agency with positive comments. These were the same phony, ginned-up comments that it used to justify the dramatic overreach of its new regulations. It is incredible, it is unbelievable, and I believe it is also illegal.

If my colleagues want another example of overreach by the Environmental Protection Agency, look at the regulations it wrote to restrict the amount of carbon dioxide produced by powerplants. It is called the Clean Power Plan. When the EPA was writing this rule, it did the exact same thing the Supreme Court just said was not even rational. The EPA counted up what it said would be the benefits of the regulation without caring at all about the true costs.

So what are the true costs? Well, according to one estimate, the new regulations would add up to \$366 billion in additional costs over the next 15 years. That cost will be passed on to consumers and will force more powerplants to close and more Americans to lose their jobs. For all of that expense, all of that damage to hard-working families, the benefits would be minimal.

The Obama administration makes wild claims about environmental benefits of this regulation. They are the

same kinds of claims that it made for the rule the Supreme Court just called unreasonable. The Agency exaggerates the benefits, the Agency ignores the costs, and it puts its thumb on the scale to come up with the policy that it wants.

One of the big costs the Environmental Protection Agency has been ignoring is the damaging health effects of the unemployment caused by the regulations. When a powerplant closes, people in those communities lose their jobs and their health suffers. High unemployment increases the likelihood of hospital visits, of illnesses, of premature death. High unemployment raises health care costs, and it hurts children's health and family well-being. Those are real costs to families, to society, and the EPA continues to intentionally ignore them.

The Environmental Protection Agency was wrong when it wrote its mercury and air toxics rule, it was wrong when it wrote its waters of the United States rule, and it was wrong when it wrote its powerplant rule.

The Supreme Court has said the Environmental Protection Agency needs to take a more honest approach—the Supreme Court telling President Obama's EPA to take an honest approach—and it needs to take the true costs into consideration. That is what States across the country are already doing. Governors in Oklahoma, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Texas are refusing to be bullied by the Obama administration. They are refusing to give up their right to decide what is best for their own citizens. I believe these States are taking the right approach. They are waiting to get a true idea of the costs as well as the benefits before they rush to allow rules that would shut down powerplants and put thousands of people out of work. The Supreme Court says that is what Washington should be doing as well.

Maybe now the Obama administration will finally listen and start basing its regulations on what the science says is true, not just on what the bureaucrats of the administration wish were true.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, in my home State of Washington and across the country, students and parents and teachers and communities are counting on us to finally fix No Child Left Behind. I have been very glad to work with Chairman ALEXANDER on our bipartisan bill called the Every Child Achieves Act. Our bipartisan bill gives States more flexibility while also including Federal guardrails to make

sure all students have access to a quality public education.

I am very proud of the bipartisan work we have done on the Senate floor—debating amendments, taking votes, and making this good bill even better. It is not the bill I would have written on my own, and I am sure it is not the bill Chairman ALEXANDER would have written on his own, but it is a good, strong step in the right direction. And it is not the last opportunity, of course, we will have to work on this bill before it is signed into law. In fact, after the Senate passes the bill today, we will go to conference, and then I will be looking forward to working closely with their ranking member, BOBBY SCOTT, with the administration, and with Democrats and Republicans in the House and Senate who are interested in building on the Senate's bipartisan work and getting this done. I hope Chairman KLINE and House Republicans will be willing to join us at the table to reach an agreement on the final product that works for our kids and our parents and our schools and our communities across the country.

Strengthening accountability is extremely important to me and to Ranking Member SCOTT. Democrats, including 42 of our Senate Democrats, voted for Senator MURPHY's accountability amendment yesterday. It is also important to the administration. We will continue to push for that in conference.

We still have more work to do today before we wrap up and vote on final passage. The senior Senator from Pennsylvania has offered an amendment to expand access to high-quality early education. That is being offered by Senator CASEY. Making sure kids can start kindergarten ready to learn is one of the best investments I believe we can make to help our kids succeed in school and later in life. I urge my colleagues to vote for that amendment when it comes up for a vote shortly. Then, of course, we will have a number of other amendments and finally passage, and hopefully we will be able to reach that in a positive way today.

Mr. President, I said this many times on the Senate floor, but it bears repeating to emphasize how important education is for the future of this country. Providing a quality education isn't just good for students today, it is an investment in our future workforce, it is an investment in our future economy, and it is an investment in a growing strong middle class that will help our country grow stronger. As we all know, across the country today, parents, students, and teachers in our communities are looking to us to fix No Child Left Behind.

So, again, I commend Senator ALEXANDER for his strong work on this, for his willingness to work on a bipartisan basis and get us to where we are today, to be able to look very soon to passing the bill out of the Senate and continuing our work to fix this broken law.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Washington for her comments. At 10:45 a.m., we will begin voting. We have six amendments—five or six that we expect to vote on, and then at 1:45 p.m. we will have passage of the bill or cloture and final passage of the bill. So we will finish our bill fixing No Child Left Behind today. Of course, in the U.S. Senate nothing is done until it is done, so I don't want to anticipate that—but I think it is fair to make a few comments about the bill at this point, anticipating we will have a successful conclusion this afternoon.

If we are able to pass a bill fixing No Child Left Behind this afternoon, it will be a remarkable accomplishment for a U.S. Senate filled with 100 experts on education. I said earlier this week that dealing with a piece of legislation about elementary and secondary education is a little bit like going to a football game at the University of Tennessee, where there are 100,000 people in the stands and every one of them is an expert on football, and they know exactly what the next play is to call. Consensus among experts is not easy, but consensus is necessary in the U.S. Senate if we are going to deal even with such a complex problem as this, and that is exactly what we have achieved.

As Senator MURRAY said, we found a consensus first about the urgent need to fix No Child Left Behind, 7 years overdue. That is our collective thought in the U.S. Congress. We tried twice the last two Congresses, but we fell apart over partisan differences. I will give Senator MURRAY credit for coming up with the idea of how we began this process earlier this year, and that was for the two of us, consulting with our committee members and other Senators, to produce a draft that would be a starting point for our committee, and that worked well. We considered nearly 60 amendments in committee, adopted 27, I believe, and the committee reported unanimously to this body a bill to fix No Child Left Behind. That gave us a very good head start because members of our committee represent some of our most liberal Members and some of our most conservative Members. The fact that we could agree on how to take that step made a big difference, and that is one reason we will succeed this afternoon in passing the bill.

So we found a consensus not only on the urgent need to fix No Child Left Behind but on how to fix No Child Left Behind, and the consensus is this: continue the law's important measurements of academic progress of students but restore to States, school districts, classrooms, teachers, and parents the responsibility for deciding what to do about improving student achievement. That theme runs through this bill.

This change, in my opinion, should produce fewer tests and more appropriate ways to measure students' achievement. It is the most effective way to advance higher State standards, better teaching, and real accountability. We have had a lot of talk about accountability during this debate, as we should have, and the Presiding Officer, as I was, having been a Governor, watched over the last 15 years how States have become better prepared in dealing with student achievement, how they worked together to create higher standards State by State, worked together to create better assessments, tests State by State, and now work together to create better accountability State by State.

This bill is a recognition of that preparation by the States and recognition also as the New York Principal of the Year said in a letter to us, that people closest to the children cherish their children, and we should not assume that just because we have flown to Washington, DC, for the week that suddenly we are so much wiser about what to do about children in 100,000 public schools and cherish the children more than the classroom teachers and the parents and the school board members and the community and the legislators and the Governors who are closer to them than we are.

The next step, if we are successful this afternoon, is to go to a conference with the House. I have had numerous discussions with Chairman KLINE at the House of Representatives. We have been on parallel paths. We know better than to try to make our institutions do exactly the same thing—that defies human nature—but we can communicate and stay in touch with each other, and our bills are not that different. The committee members are familiar with the bill. There are some important differences, and we will have to work those out, but our goal, if we succeed today, is to take the bill passed by the House, put it together with the Senate bill, produce a conference report, and send it to the desk of President Obama in a form he will be comfortable signing.

I believe the President also sees the need to fix No Child Left Behind. He knows there is confusion and anxiety in most of our 100,000 public schools that need to be settled, and we hope we have come up with a version of the bill that while it wouldn't be the bill he would write if only he were writing it—and as Senator MURRAY said, it is not the bill she would write if only she were writing it, and it certainly would not be the bill I would write if only I were writing it, but we had a consensus we needed to come to. Why do we need a consensus? Because that is how to govern in a complex society.

I first came to the Senate at a young age in the late sixties, and I watched Everett Dirksen, the Republican leader, and President Johnson, the Democratic President, work together to produce the civil rights legislation.

That was more difficult than this—although this has been pretty difficult. It took 68 votes to get cloture at that time, and they did that. It was only because they had a consensus. Senator Russell from Georgia, who had opposed the civil rights bill, went home to Georgia the next day and said: It is the law of the land. We need to support it. The way to govern a complex country is through consensus, and the agency of our government that is the only agent for encouraging and achieving consensus is the U.S. Senate. I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for creating an environment where we could do that.

Senator MCCONNELL has done that by putting the bill on the floor, giving us enough time to have amendments, and having a policy of encouraging amendments so Senators on both sides can have their say, both on the committee and on the floor. There have been more Democratic amendments considered and adopted than Republican amendments, and that is appropriate. Senator CORNYN, Senator THUNE, Senator BARRASSO on this side of the aisle have been very helpful.

I have several times thanked the Democratic leader Senator REID. He has helped to create an environment that permitted this to move in an orderly fashion. We basically conducted the end of the consideration of this bill by unanimous consent. Enough Senators had a chance to have their say that they agreed by unanimous consent that we can consider these amendments and only these amendments in a certain way, with a certain amount of time, and go all the way through to the end. That is a very good way to operate the Senate, and the Democratic leader made that possible, first by allowing the bill to come to the floor without a cloture vote and by working with us as we went through it, and Senator SCHUMER and Senator DURBIN, who along with Senator MURRAY are part of the Democratic leadership, have done the same.

Senator VITTER, Senator LEE, Senator TOOMEY, and Senator BURR have all stepped back a little bit on things they would like to do—so did Senator FRANKEN and so did Senator CASEY on that side of the aisle. In other words, a number of Senators exercised restraint to permit us to work toward a result. In a body that operates by unanimous consent, that is absolutely essential. So this has been a good process.

We have six more amendments this morning, and we look forward to debating those and acting on them. At 1:45, hopefully, we will have a big vote in favor of fixing No Child Left Behind, reflecting the consensus that will keep the important measurements of student achievement, but we will turn back and restore to the State and local governments the responsibility for what to do about the results of those tests. That is the consensus in this bill that survived very well through the committee process and through the

amendments so far, and I expect it to survive through the rest of the day.

Thank you, Mr. President.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2180

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will now be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Cruz amendment No. 2180.

The Senator from Texas.

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, there are a number of Members of this body who in good faith are moving forward to reduce the Federal burdens on States, on teachers, on education. Yet at the end of the day, this bill still mandates specific testing requirements. This amendment is a straightforward amendment to remove the testing mandates and to leave the substance of any testing that occurs to the States.

This leaves power over choices in education in the hands of teachers, in the hands of school boards, in the hands of States, in the hands of government that is closest to the people. We have seen with the bipartisan objection to Common Core that the last thing we need in education is unelected bureaucrats in Washington dictating what is being taught to kids at home. This amendment simply takes out the Federal mandates and empowers teachers, school boards, and parents to control the education of their own children.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I would urge a “no” vote on this amendment. This is the report card. The Federal Government is saying: We will give you \$23 billion, and all we are asking in return is that you, State, write a test; that you, State, figure out what the accountability system is and you report it to the parents and the public.

That would mean a third grader, for example, would take two tests a year. Each test would be about 2 hours. So it is a State test, a State assessment. In our Alexander-Murray bipartisan bill, we keep what works in No Child Left Behind, which is the report card, but we get rid of what does not work, and we give back to States responsibility for determining student achievement. This is the consensus that supports this bill.

Keeping the important measure of student achievement is essential to maintaining that consensus. So if you want to get rid of the Common Core mandate, get rid of the waivers for 42 States, reverse the trend to a national school board, vote no and keep the requirement for important measures of student achievement, which are State tests.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to amendment No. 2180.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. FISCHER). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 40, nays 58, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 242 Leg.]

#### YEAS—40

Barrasso	Grassley	Risch
Blunt	Hatch	Roberts
Boozman	Heller	Rubio
Burr	Hoeven	Sasse
Cassidy	Inhofe	Scott
Coats	Isakson	Sessions
Cornyn	Johnson	Shelby
Cotton	Lankford	Sullivan
Crapo	Lee	Tillis
Cruz	McCain	Toomey
Daines	McConnell	Vitter
Enzi	Moran	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	
Fischer	Perdue	

#### NAYS—58

Alexander	Flake	Murray
Ayotte	Franken	Peters
Baldwin	Gardner	Portman
Bennet	Gillibrand	Reed
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Reid
Booker	Heitkamp	Rounds
Boxer	Hirono	Sanders
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Capito	Kirk	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Tester
Cochran	Markey	Thune
Collins	McCaskill	Udall
Coons	Menendez	Warner
Corker	Merkley	Warren
Donnelly	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murkowski	Wyden
Feinstein	Murphy	

#### NOT VOTING—2

Graham  
Nelson

The amendment (No. 2180) was rejected.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2177

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Sanders amendment No. 2177.

The Senator from Vermont.

Mr. SANDERS. Madam President, I applaud President Obama for visiting a Federal penitentiary today to highlight the fact that, tragically, the United States has more people in jail than any other country on Earth. One of the reasons we have so many people in jail is that we have an obscenely high level of youth unemployment: for young White kids, 33 percent; for Hispanic kids, 36 percent; for African-American kids, 51 percent.

The time has come for us to begin investing in jobs and education for our kids, not jails and incarceration. This bill, over a 2-year period, would create 2 million jobs for our young people. It is paid for by closing the carried-interest loophole that allows billionaires to pay a lower tax rate than working class Americans.

It is high time we addressed this issue of high youth unemployment. I ask for bipartisan support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, the five remaining votes will be 10-minute votes.

I urge a "no" vote, No. 1, because this proposal is unconstitutional. You cannot start a tax increase in the Senate. It has to start in the House. No. 2, we already have three workforce programs that we created just last year: Jobs Corps, the youth bill, and dislocated workers. No. 3, it is a big tax increase. So because it is a big tax increase, because it is duplicative of existing programs, and because it is unconstitutional, I urge a "no" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 43, nays 55, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 243 Leg.]

YEAS—43

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Reed
Bennet	Heinrich	Reid
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Sanders
Booker	Hirono	Schatz
Boxer	Kaine	Schumer
Brown	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Cantwell	Leahy	Stabenow
Cardin	Markey	Tester
Carper	McCaskill	Udall
Casey	Menendez	Warner
Coons	Merkley	Warren
Donnelly	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Durbin	Murphy	Wyden
Feinstein	Murray	
Franken	Peters	

NAYS—55

Alexander	Cotton	Inhofe
Ayotte	Crapo	Isakson
Barrasso	Cruz	Johnson
Blunt	Daines	King
Boozman	Enzi	Kirk
Burr	Ernst	Lankford
Capito	Fischer	Lee
Cassidy	Flake	Manchin
Coats	Gardner	McCain
Cochran	Grassley	McConnell
Collins	Hatch	Moran
Corker	Heller	Murkowski
Cornyn	Hoeven	Paul

Perdue	Sasse	Tillis
Portman	Scott	Toomey
Risch	Sessions	Vitter
Roberts	Shelby	Wicker
Rounds	Sullivan	
Rubio	Thune	

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Nelson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

AMENDMENT NO. 2243

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Coons amendment No. 2243.

The Senator from Delaware.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, the bipartisan amendment I am offering today with Senator RUBIO—and I am grateful to Senator GILLIBRAND for cosponsoring—this American dream accounts amendment is about one thing: giving every child the chance to go to college if they are willing to work hard for it. Time and again, we have seen in this country what kids can achieve when they know their dreams are possible. That is what this amendment and the American dream accounts help solve, ensuring that every child knows a college education is possible.

The American dream accounts encourage partnerships in 10 demonstration sites to develop secure, Web-based student accounts that develop information about each student's literacy and academic preparedness and then ties it to high-impact mentoring and a college savings account.

I myself have seen over the years of working with the national "I Have a Dream" Foundation how sending the message to our kids that college is a real possibility for them can make a powerful impact, from elementary school, to middle school, to high school, to college, and it has an impact that changes their behavior and their outcomes in school.

American dream accounts are a bipartisan idea whose time has come. I urge my colleagues to support it with a "yes" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, if I could have the attention of Senators, we have four more votes before lunch. It is 11:40 a.m. What we would like to do is to have 10-minute votes. So if Senators will stay on the floor, we will have 10-minute votes or come as close to that as we can.

Madam President, this is an interesting idea, but it belongs in the Higher Education Act, which we are about to take up in our committee, and here is why: It duplicates two existing Federal programs called Gear Up and TRIO.

No. 2, we already have \$30 billion of tax credits that we spend. This involves more tax credits. We already spend \$30 billion. We should calculate the advantages of this program, along

with the \$100 billion of loans we make, the \$35 billion of Pell grants we make, the \$30 billion of tax credits we have, and see where it fits into that. The time to do that is in the next big bill we have from our committee, which is the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

I urge a "no" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. COONS. Madam President, how much time do I have remaining?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. There is no time remaining.

Mr. RUBIO. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 68, nays 30, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 244 Leg.]

YEAS—68

Ayotte	Gardner	Murray
Baldwin	Gillibrand	Peters
Bennet	Heinrich	Reed
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reid
Blunt	Hirono	Risch
Booker	Hoeven	Rubio
Boozman	Inhofe	Sanders
Boxer	Johnson	Sasse
Brown	Kaine	Schatz
Cantwell	King	Schumer
Capito	Kirk	Scott
Cardin	Klobuchar	Shaheen
Carper	Leahy	Stabenow
Casey	Manchin	Sullivan
Coons	Markey	Tester
Cotton	McCain	Toomey
Crapo	McCaskill	Udall
Cruz	McConnell	Vitter
Daines	Menendez	Warner
Donnelly	Merkley	Warren
Durbin	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Feinstein	Moran	Wyden
Franken	Murphy	

NAYS—30

Alexander	Ernst	Paul
Barrasso	Fischer	Perdue
Burr	Flake	Portman
Cassidy	Grassley	Roberts
Coats	Hatch	Rounds
Cochran	Heller	Sessions
Collins	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	Lankford	Thune
Cornyn	Lee	Tillis
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Nelson

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 2247, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Burr amendment No. 2247, as modified.

The Senator from North Carolina.  
 Mr. BURR. Madam President, in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson, when the ESEA was passed, said this: Financial assistance to school districts serving areas with concentrations of children of low income should be the target of it. We have never successfully targeted all of those kids in poverty.

Let me say to my colleagues, if your State is in red, your poor students lose under the current formula.

Now, we have come to a compromise, and though I don't think it reflects the best policy, compromise is at the heart of this institution. Therefore, with \$14 billion worth of appropriations in title I-A today, this new formula would not take place until we have reached \$17 billion, meaning for the next years—probably 10 based upon historical numbers—there would be no change in the distribution in any States. But after that point, this body, for once—for the first time in 50 years—would have the money follow kids in poverty, represented by the red States we see on this map.

I urge my colleagues to support this amendment. It is the right thing to do. I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask that 30 seconds of my time be yielded to the Senator from Ohio.

I oppose this amendment. I thank the Senators from Tennessee, Washington, and North Carolina for making it less onerous. We did come to a compromise. As he said, it starts at \$17 billion, but there is still a major fallacy here.

When we change formulas, we have always held harmless the States that would lose money, but we have been able to increase money. In this bill, we don't. We keep it flat. So we are robbing Peter to pay Paul, which will be an awful precedent which will bite every one of us.

Second, my good friend said the money should go to people from poverty, but they also voted against the Merkley amendment, which required the money to go to people in poverty, and now it can go anywhere.

So I respectfully urge my colleagues to oppose this amendment, although it is improved from the original.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. PORTMAN. Madam President, I appreciate the fact that we have delayed the impact of this, but the impact is still severe. In my State and many other States, we will see a significant cut.

Do my colleagues know what it is? It is telling States that if you invest in children, you are going to be penalized.

This legislation, the underlying bill, is about helping our children succeed. Yet, in this amendment, we are actually telling States that if you help your kids succeed, you are going to be penalized under a new formula. It is not part of the bill that came out of committee. It is not part of the underlying bill.

So I urge my colleagues to vote no on this amendment and ensure that the States that are helping our kids continue to be able to do so.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. ALEXANDER. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.  
 The legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 59, nays 39, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 245 Leg.]

YEAS—59

Alexander	Ernst	Murkowski
Ayotte	Feinstein	Murray
Barrasso	Flake	Paul
Bennet	Franken	Perdue
Blunt	Gardner	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Boxer	Hatch	Rounds
Burr	Heitkamp	Rubio
Cantwell	Heller	Scott
Coats	Hoeven	Sessions
Cochran	Inhofe	Shaheen
Collins	Isakson	Shelby
Corker	King	Sullivan
Cornyn	Klobuchar	Tester
Cotton	Lankford	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Cruz	McCaskill	Udall
Daines	McConnell	Wicker
Donnelly	Merkley	Wyden
Enzi	Moran	

NAYS—39

Baldwin	Heinrich	Portman
Blumenthal	Hirono	Reed
Booker	Johnson	Reid
Brown	Kaine	Sanders
Capito	Kirk	Sasse
Cardin	Leahy	Schatz
Carper	Lee	Schumer
Casey	Manchin	Stabenow
Cassidy	Markey	Toomey
Coons	Menendez	Vitter
Durbin	Mikulski	Warner
Fischer	Murphy	Warren
Gillibrand	Peters	Whitehouse

NOT VOTING—2

Graham	Nelson
--------	--------

The amendment (No. 2247), as modified, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New York.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to engage in a brief colloquy with my colleagues from the State of Tennessee and the State of Washington for no more than 2 minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. Thank you, Madam President.

As we stated, some of us had serious objections to changing the formula, but thankfully the modified amendment follows in a tradition of com-

promise. And I appreciate my colleagues from Tennessee, Washington, and North Carolina working on it. As a result, we will continue to abide by the "do no harm" principle. New York's funding will not be cut, and neither will the funding in any of the other 13 States that would have been cut by the original amendment. We will not punish schools unfairly by using a formula that creates winners and losers. This takes the idea of losing school districts off the table. So, again, I would like to thank my colleagues for working with me to ensure that our students in New York and the 13 other States do not start the next school year at a disadvantage with fewer school resources.

The title I changes we have agreed to reflect our commitment to increasing funding and supporting funding for low- and moderate-income students. I appreciate the commitment my colleagues from Tennessee and Washington have made, and I would like to confirm those here on the floor.

I would ask my dear friend Senator ALEXANDER—I would like you to confirm your commitment to maintain this title I funding proposal which we just passed which is contained in amendment No. 2247, as modified—when the Senate and House convene a conference, that we will not go any lower than this.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I would say through the Chair to the distinguished Senator from New York and the Senator from Illinois and the Republican Senators who are interested in this that the answer to Senator SCHUMER's question is yes, that my commitment is to work—to keep the Senate decision in conference.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, reclaiming the floor, I would just ask my dear friend from the State of Washington whether she concurs in that statement.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Madam President, through the Chair to the Senator from New York, I will work in conference to keep the commitment of this amendment.

Mr. DURBIN addressed the Chair.  
 Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I yield to my friend from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that I be given 1 more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield that minute to the Senator from Illinois.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Illinois.

Mr. DURBIN. I thank my friend and colleague from New York.

Madam President, the original core amendment would have cost Illinois \$180 million in title I funds—\$68 million cut to Chicago Public Schools. It was

unconscionable. It would have been devastating. They have so many low-income students. I am glad there is a better approach now.

I hope the title I funding will reach \$17 billion soon. It is currently at \$14.4 billion, and it has been at that level roughly for the last 5 years.

I thank my colleagues from Tennessee and Washington for affirming that they are going to stand behind this protection during the course of the conference committee.

I would like to commend the leaders of the HELP Committee for working with Senators to reach an agreement on Senator BURR's proposal to rewrite the formula for distributing title I education dollars to the States.

Title I is the single largest source of Federal funding for elementary and secondary education. It helps States and districts offer the kind of teachers and extra services that help low-income students learn and succeed in school.

The Burr amendment we just voted on would change the way those dollars are distributed and would hurt low-income students in Illinois—based in part on the fact that Illinois spends more per pupil on elementary and secondary education than the national average. That is neither fair nor good policy.

The original Burr amendment would have cut Illinois' title I funding by \$180 million next year. Every district in the State receiving title I funds would have seen a cut. With the modifications we were able to work out, Illinois' students won't be hurt until title I funding at the Federal level reaches \$17 billion a year.

While I hope Federal title I spending would reach \$17 billion soon, is currently at \$14.4 billion and has remained around that level for the last 5 years. Looking at history and understanding the fiscal challenges in Congress, it is unlikely that Illinois' title I allocation would be impacted by the new formula during the 5-year lifespan of this authorization bill.

I am concerned, however, that the agreement we reached in the Senate could be undermined during conference negotiations with the House. I ask the leaders of the committee, through the Chair, for their assurance that the title I formula will not be further altered in conference.

Mr. SCHUMER. I yield the floor.

AMENDMENT NO. 2100

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Brown amendment No. 2100.

The Senator from Ohio.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, the Brown-Manchin amendment expands the full-service community schools model to schools across the country. Community schools are different from Promised Neighborhoods—two different approaches to what is a complex set of challenges. Community schools start with a focus on the school, engage

partners in joint efforts to improve student achievement and development, and in the process work to strengthen family and community.

Madam President, I yield the remainder of my time to Senator MANCHIN.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

Mr. MANCHIN. Madam President, all of us have challenged areas in our States. I have a county—one of the poorest counties in the country is McDowell County. These children have no chance whatsoever. It has the absolute worst statistics any child could be living in. And it is because of these programs that are bringing the compassion of public-private partnerships that we are able to work through to re-establish the services these children won't get. The areas are so sparsely populated, and there is high unemployment.

I would encourage all of you to support this amendment. It continues the program. It is worthwhile. We have McDowell County now with 125 public-private partnerships that we would not have, and these children will not have a chance without them. I encourage your support.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I urge a "no" vote because States may already do what the amendment says they can do in this new program. There is money in titles I, II, and IV to do that. All this does is take money away from existing programs and give it to a new program which States, if they choose, can already do.

Second, we are approving today an almost identical program called Promised Neighborhoods which the Center for American Progress recommended Congress consolidate with the program this amendment would authorize and create. So we are creating two programs that do the same thing in the same day. In addition, the Education Department Secretary for the Obama administration said Promised Neighborhood in full-service community schools are much more similar than different.

So we need to stop this business of doing well-intentioned programs. One well-intentioned program is enough. We don't need to create two that do the same thing.

I urge a "no" vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. MANCHIN. I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 53, nays 44, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 246 Leg.]

YEAS—53

Ayotte	Fischer	Murphy
Baldwin	Franken	Murray
Bennet	Gillibrand	Peters
Blumenthal	Heinrich	Portman
Blunt	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Hoeven	Sanders
Brown	Isakson	Schatz
Cantwell	Kaine	Schumer
Capito	King	Shaheen
Cardin	Klobuchar	Stabenow
Carper	Leahy	Tester
Casey	Manchin	Udall
Collins	Markey	Warner
Coons	McCaskill	Warren
Donnelly	Menendez	Whitehouse
Durbin	Merkley	Wyden
Feinstein	Mikulski	

NAYS—44

Alexander	Flake	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Risch
Boozman	Grassley	Roberts
Burr	Hatch	Rounds
Cassidy	Heller	Sasse
Coats	Inhofe	Scott
Cochran	Johnson	Sessions
Corker	Kirk	Shelby
Cornyn	Lankford	Sullivan
Cotton	Lee	Thune
Crapo	McCain	Tillis
Cruz	McConnell	Toomey
Daines	Moran	Vitter
Enzi	Murkowski	Wicker
Ernst	Paul	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Nelson	Rubio
--------	--------	-------

The amendment (No. 2100) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, for the information of Senators, this is the last vote before lunch. We will have two votes beginning at 1:45 p.m., a cloture vote and the vote on final passage.

AMENDMENT NO. 2242

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, there will be 2 minutes of debate equally divided prior to a vote on the Casey amendment No. 2242.

The Senator from Pennsylvania.

Mr. CASEY. Madam President, this amendment focuses on the link between learning and earning. We know that if we invest in our children in pre-kindergarten education, they will learn more now and earn more later. It is a State-Federal partnership. It is paid for. It focuses on 4-year-olds. Three million 4-year-olds in the country will benefit from high-quality early learning.

The best testimony about this issue comes from parents. Beth in southwestern Pennsylvania said—talking about an early learning program in Pennsylvania: Her daughter couldn't write any of her letters or even recognize them. Now she's improved so much since the first day of class.

And then Megan in southeastern Pennsylvania said: When her son came into this program, he was shy and had very little verbal communication. He now talks nonstop and loves hearing.

That is why we need this amendment to pass. I urge a “yes” vote on the Casey amendment.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Madam President, I urge a “no” vote.

The amendment is unnecessary because the Federal Government already spends \$22 billion on early childhood education through 45 programs. States spend money through the title I program on early childhood education. Our underlying bill has an important amendment on early childhood, fashioned by Senator MURRAY and Senator ISAKSON, to spend that money more effectively.

This proposal has a familiar ring. It is like a Medicaid mandate, States would pay 40 percent. It is like a national school board, the Federal Government would define teacher salaries, class size, staff-child ratios, and professional development. It is a national school board for 4-year-olds. That is the reverse of what we want to do in this bill.

Another familiar ring is it would be Common Core for kindergarten, so I urge a “no” vote.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the amendment.

Mr. WICKER. Madam President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There appears to be a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 45, nays 52, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 247 Leg.]

YEAS—45

Baldwin	Gillibrand	Murray
Bennet	Heinrich	Peters
Blumenthal	Heitkamp	Reed
Booker	Hirono	Reid
Boxer	Kaine	Sanders
Brown	King	Schatz
Cantwell	Klobuchar	Schumer
Cardin	Leahy	Shaheen
Carper	Manchin	Stabenow
Casey	Markey	Tester
Coons	McCaskill	Udall
Donnelly	Menendez	Warner
Durbin	Merkley	Warren
Feinstein	Mikulski	Whitehouse
Franken	Murphy	Wyden

NAYS—52

Alexander	Coats	Daines
Ayotte	Cochran	Enzi
Barrasso	Collins	Ernst
Blunt	Corker	Fischer
Boozman	Cornyn	Flake
Burr	Cotton	Gardner
Capito	Crapo	Grassley
Cassidy	Cruz	Hatch

Heller	Moran	Sessions
Hoeven	Murkowski	Shelby
Inhofe	Paul	Sullivan
Isakson	Perdue	Thune
Johnson	Portman	Tillis
Kirk	Risch	Toomey
Lankford	Roberts	Vitter
Lee	Rounds	Wicker
McCain	Sasse	
McConnell	Scott	

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Nelson	Rubio
--------	--------	-------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order requiring 60 votes for the adoption of this amendment, the amendment is rejected.

The Senator from South Dakota.

AMENDMENT NO. 2232

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I wish to make just a quick couple of comments on an amendment that I appreciate the floor managers, Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY, agreeing to accept by voice vote. It deals with an issue that is really important to my home State.

This amendment would expand the authorized use of Project School Emergency Response to Violence—what we call Project SERV—grants to include violence prevention.

Currently, Project SERV funds are used to restore the learning environment by addressing the disruptive effects of a traumatic crisis or event. However, these funds cannot be used to fund violence prevention activities, such as afterschool programs, mentoring, anger management or skills-building programs.

My amendment would permit a limited and focused expansion of Project SERV to permit prevention activities as part of the efforts to restore the learning environment in cases where there is a continued risk of disruption. This would better tie prevention to a crisis or trauma that has already occurred and better restore and preserve the learning environment in cases such as the tragic suicide crisis in Indian Country or gang violence.

For example, on South Dakota’s Pine Ridge Indian Reservation alone, two high school and two middle school age students have committed suicide just since December. My amendment would help give these areas of crisis additional flexibility in restoring our schools to safe and positive environments.

I have worked closely with Chairman ALEXANDER and Ranking Member MURRAY to keep this expansion limited so as not to detract from Project SERV’s current scope, and I appreciate very much their help and the Senate’s support.

Mr. President, I now ask unanimous consent that following the disposition of the Warren amendment No. 2249, all postcloture time on the substitute amendment be yielded back; further, that the cloture vote on S. 1177 be at 1:45 p.m. today, and that if cloture is invoked, all postcloture time, except for 4 minutes equally divided between Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY, be yielded back; and following the use or yielding back of time, the Senate vote

on passage of S. 1177, as amended, if amended.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

AMENDMENT NO. 2082

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, the Hatch-Bennet amendment amends the early learning grant program to allow States to use Pay for Success Initiatives to improve the quality and coordination of the State’s system of early learning and care services. My home State of Utah has the first-ever pay for success program designed to expand access to early childhood education for at-risk children. The Utah High Quality Preschool Program delivers a high-impact, targeted curriculum that increases school readiness and academic performance among 3- and 4-year-olds. As children enter kindergarten better prepared, fewer students will need to use special education and remedial services in kindergarten through 12th grade, allowing schools and States to save money. We should build on this success and empower other States to do the same.

I should reiterate that this amendment only allows government funds to be used if the program is successful, encouraging effective use of taxpayer dollars. We should be allowing States to use their funding to encourage ground-up, evidence-based practices. I look forward to seeing meaningful results.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Hatch amendment No. 2082.

The amendment (No. 2082) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2106

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Warren amendment No. 2106.

The amendment (No. 2106) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2130

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Schatz amendment No. 2130.

The amendment (No. 2130) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2186

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Murphy amendment No. 2186.

The amendment (No. 2186) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2215, AS MODIFIED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Nelson amendment No. 2215, as modified.

The amendment (No. 2215), as modified, was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2222

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Manchin amendment No. 2222.

The amendment (No. 2222) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2231

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Boozman amendment No. 2231.

The amendment (No. 2231) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2188

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Baldwin amendment No. 2188.

The amendment (No. 2188) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2156

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Capito amendment No. 2156.

The amendment (No. 2156) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2232

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Thune amendment No. 2232.

The amendment (No. 2232) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2256

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the King amendment No. 2256.

The amendment (No. 2256) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2240

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Schatz amendment No. 2240.

The amendment (No. 2240) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2249

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the Warren amendment No. 2249.

The amendment (No. 2249) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, all postcloture time on the substitute amendment is yielded back.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2095

The question is on agreeing to the Peters amendment No. 2095.

The amendment (No. 2095) was agreed to.

VOTE ON AMENDMENT NO. 2089, AS AMENDED

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The question is on agreeing to the substitute amendment, as amended.

The amendment (No. 2089), as amended, was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Colorado.

AMENDMENT NO. 2249

Mr. GARDNER Mr. President, I thank the Senator from Washington and the Senator from Tennessee for their leadership over the past several days—last week and this week—as we talk about the future of education in this country. I commend them for creating a bill that takes away the Federal Government's mandates on curriculum and direction and makes sure we provide local control to school districts and teachers.

As a father myself of a student who is going into the sixth grade, I have heard a lot about tests over the past several years, and I want to commend the leadership for making sure we are actually getting Congress out of the classroom. So I appreciate my colleagues' leadership.

Today I want to talk about an amendment accepted in the education bill we are dealing with here today that deals with the use of title I funds for concurrent and dual enrollment programs at eligible schools throughout the country.

According to the Georgetown Public Policy Institute, by 2020, 65 percent of the jobs available in the country today will require secondary education. In Colorado, that number is even higher. Again, by 2020, 65 percent of our jobs will require secondary education. In Colorado, that number is going to be greater. The Colorado Department of Education estimates it is not just 65 percent of the jobs that require a secondary education in Colorado by 2020. It will actually be 74 percent of the jobs in our State that are going to require some form of postsecondary education.

Ensuring that our students have the skills necessary to excel in college and in the workforce is absolutely and by far and away the best way to address this concern so we can make sure that we are providing our students with successful futures. Concurrent enrollment and dual enrollment programs have a proven record of success in this arena.

I was in the State legislature in Colorado when we embarked on the first concurrent enrollment ideas that came out of the legislature and that have been greatly successful. But we know it is not just the anecdotes from Colorado, but it is the American Institutes for Research that finds that participation in concurrent and dual enrollment programs reduces the number of students dropping out of high school, increasing a student's likelihood of entering college, making sure they complete college, and getting through to a career.

But our challenge today is that an astounding number of students need to take remedial courses when they enter college. Sitting down with junior college leaders and community college presidents and talking to our universities, they all tell stories about how many students come from high schools to their college or to their campus requiring remedial work in English or mathematics.

According to a report by testing organization ETS, nearly one-half of U.S. millennials scored below the threshold that indicates proficiency in literacy, and two-thirds of U.S. millennials missed the cutoff mark in math proficiency.

Students are discouraged from continuing college when they are required to take courses—nobody wants to go on to college and take the same course—that you thought you had completed in high school. But concurrent and dual enrollment will help solve this problem by allowing students to participate in college-level courses, which, upon completion, will ensure that these students are indeed proficient.

Not only does concurrent and dual enrollment allow proficiency, but it al-

lows students to get ahead of the curve and doing so while in high school.

A study by the National Education Longitudinal Study found that concurrent and dual enrollment participants were 16 to 20 percent more likely to complete a bachelor's degree than their counterparts. Research shows that students who participate in concurrent and dual enrollment programs complete their degrees earlier than their counterparts as well.

A study in 2010 by Kristen Klopfenstein, a Colorado native and graduate of the University of Texas, found that "the results of taking one or more concurrent or dual credit class tripled the likelihood of graduating from associate programs in three years in relation to students who did not take such courses who typically graduate in four years."

"Dual enrollment participation was also positively correlated to completing bachelor's degrees in four and five years, relative to students who did not take such courses who typically take longer to graduate."

These are the types of programs that reward students for their hard work and prepare them for their college career and success.

Many people recognize that courses that provide college credit are typically taken by high-achieving students already on the path to college. A lot of college courses that we see are filled with people we knew were destined for college in the first place. But I think we have to talk about the times where that is not the case, where college courses were taken by people who perhaps never thought they had college in their future. I will share one such story today.

We were visited in the office not too long ago by a young woman from Colorado who told her story about how concurrent enrollment in Colorado really opened the doors to a college future and a college degree she never thought was possible.

The community where I come from is not one that promises a bright future. I am from a low income area of Denver, CO, and we weren't expected to go to college.

I had always known I wanted to pursue higher education, but was nervous that I wouldn't have the skills to succeed.

Fortunately for me, because of concurrent enrollment I was able to get ahead in college for free. I graduated high school with all of my high school credits along with 15 credit hours of college credits.

Concurrent enrollment has helped me in phenomenal ways. It gave me the confidence to know I had the capabilities to succeed in college.

In addition, with the high cost of college I was able to save money. I am now a student at Colorado State University and made the Dean's list this semester.

I am on track to graduate early and it would never have been possible without the programs I participated in in high school.

I want to spread the word so other students can benefit from concurrent enrollment the way that I have. Every young person who wants to go to college should have the opportunity to attend, and I'm thankful I had the opportunity to do so.

Those aren't my words. Those are the words of a Coloradan whose future was made brighter by the fact that she was able to take advantage, while in high school, of college credit classes.

Stories like this are why we have to make sure that, not just Coloradans, but everyone across this country, is able to use title I programs in the same beneficial manner.

So the amendment we offered and that has been accepted, thanks to the work of Senator ALEXANDER, our great chairman, and Ranking Member PATTY MURRAY, would empower students to use these kinds of programs and would allow schools to use title I funds for concurrent and dual enrollment programs, enabling students to simultaneously receive college credit from courses taught by college-approved teachers in secondary education. It would allow eligible schools to use fifth-year program partnerships with institutions of higher education to allow students to participate in concurrent enrollment in the year directly following their senior year of high school.

Earning a postsecondary degree has become a prerequisite for jobs in the 21st century. Going back to the statistics that we shared in the very beginning, 74 percent of jobs in Colorado will require, by the year 2020, a postsecondary education degree. As we face more competition in the global workplace, as we face more competition abroad, we have to have the kinds of education and educational opportunities that give the next generation of business leaders, innovators, and entrepreneurs the skills to succeed.

I believe the concurrent and dual enrollment high school program not only gives them the types of skills they need while in high school but the opportunity to further a college degree and perhaps, as in the story I shared earlier today from that young Coloradan, the chance to go to college, the chance to receive a degree, and to prove they have that bright future. That is what this policy is about. That is what this amendment has been about.

Again, I thank the chairman for the consideration and acceptance of the amendment.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from West Virginia.

AMENDMENT NO. 2222

Mr. MANCHIN. Mr. President, I rise today to talk about a problem that each one of us—all 100 Senators—knows. In any gathering we go to, in our State or around the country, people are affected by drug abuse, whether legal or illegal. In our personal families, immediate families or extended families, we know somebody whose life is affected.

So today I urge my colleagues to support a commonsense amendment that I have introduced to the Every Child Achieves Act that addresses an epidemic that is devastating to my State

and our country—and I know to the Presiding Officer's State also—which is substance abuse.

Communities across the country, including many in my beautiful State of West Virginia, are seeing an alarming rise in substance abuse and addiction to legal prescription drugs. These are drugs we would find in the medicine cabinet of our home.

West Virginia is No. 1 in overdose deaths—No. 1 in overdose deaths—due to drug abuse.

We have seen over a 600-percent increase in the number of people dying since 1999. Nationally, 21.6 million Americans are battling substance dependence or abuse. But as most of us know, we can't truly understand substance abuse by just listening to facts and statistics. It is one that can only be understood by hearing stories of those impacted.

When I was Governor of the State of West Virginia, I traveled around the State, and I saw firsthand the effects that substance abuse can have. We tried to tackle many of these issues at the State level. But it is impossible. All of us have to be in this.

But one of the most moving experiences occurred during my first trip back to the Mountain State after becoming a Senator. I traveled to the really beautiful little town of Oceana, WV.

I went to Oceana Middle School, where I had expected to talk about the importance of receiving a good education and working hard to gain the necessary skills to be successful in the workforce. Instead, I heard personal stories from 11-year-olds who spoke candidly about the ways that drugs were tearing apart their families, their homes, and their community.

As tears trickled down their faces, they shared how they rarely played outside because too many needles coated the streets and drug deals often took place right in front of them.

It is one thing to hear about overdoses and addictions from doctors, medical experts or police officers who deal with substance abuse cases every day. But I can tell you that it is another thing to sit across from an 11-year-old girl who is fighting through tears to describe how her family and her family life have been destroyed.

Her father was hurt in the coal mines and gradually became addicted to painkillers, causing her family to lose everything. As I listened to her story, I couldn't help but think that this young girl had to grow up so very fast and miss some of the pleasures of childhood.

That is why I am doing everything in my power to fight this national problem. My commonsense bipartisan amendment with Senator AYOTTE would simply require that, in States where this is a significant problem, the State education plan include a strategy for how the State will help local education agencies educate students who face substance abuse in their home.

What we are saying is no child can be in a drug-infected home and have a normal childhood. They can't have a normal learning experience in the school system.

To be clear, it does not prescribe or require any particular response. We are not saying you have to do this. The States that wish to have this done can. It simply gives the States the flexibility to craft proposals that meet particular local needs.

That means if there is a child that basically needs extracurricular activity, extra help, extra support, preschool or afterschool, they are able to intervene and change the system that would meet the needs of that community.

Substance abuse by parents and other caregivers can have a significant negative impact on the well-being of children, and it makes it more difficult for them to learn and thrive in schools, as we know.

This amendment is a small step forward toward addressing that problem. But it will encourage the States to consider solutions that will enable local schools and communities to better help these vulnerable children and ensure that every child is ready to learn.

Our country, our States, our communities, our schools, and our children need us to take action to protect them from the devastation of substance abuse.

I am often reminded of the five promises we as adults should make to every child. Colin Powell started this—the five promises—and my wife and I have adopted it when I was Governor. We still have a foundation.

The first promise is that every child has to have a loving, caring adult in their life—a loving, caring adult and unconditional love.

Second, every child should have a safe place.

Every child should have a healthy start in life.

Every child should have an education and have a skill set.

The fifth promise is what we can't teach. We can usually show it from example. Every child should grow to be a loving, caring adult and give something back.

If we don't give children the chance to have that type of an experience and they know they don't have a loving, caring adult, and they don't have a safe place because the home has been ruined because of drug abuse, this is where we need to step in. If we are going to save a generation, this is where we do it. This is the frontline of defense today.

The No. 1 thing that is killing our country is drug abuse, and it is basically coming from prescription drugs. It starts with manufacturing. It goes down with the FDA putting all these lethal drugs on the market that we never had before. It goes down to distribution and dispensing by doctors. Yet we don't have any treatment centers to cure people once they get into it.

So I am asking all of you to please consider supporting this amendment. It is most reasonable, most responsible. It is not mandatory. It is optional. You can fit the needs and tailor this however your community, your State or your county might need.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from New Mexico.

JUSTICE FOR TULAROSA BASIN DOWNWINDERS

Mr. UDALL. Mr. President, 70 years ago today, the first atomic bomb was exploded at the Trinity test site in New Mexico. For our Nation, it was the beginning of the nuclear age. For the residents of the Tularosa Basin, it was also the beginning—of great suffering, of generations of cancer and chronic illness. Seven decades later, their suffering continues and so does their fight for justice.

Windows rattled hundreds of miles away. The people of Tularosa saw radioactive debris fall from the sky, not knowing what it was. The fallout killed cattle, and poisoned water, food, and the air. The damage was done. The destruction was real, and so is the sadness, disappointment, and anger. That is very real too.

The Tularosa Basin Downwinders have not forgotten. They rightly ask that we not forget, either.

I met with them and their families earlier this month in Tularosa, and they told me their stories, some of which I will share today.

Henry Herrera was just 11 years old at the time of the blast. He is now 81. He remembers:

I heard a very large blast and saw a very big flash of light. I got so scared I thought the world was coming to an end.

He himself is a cancer survivor. He told me:

I'm the only one alive to tell about it. Everyone else has died of cancer.

Edna Hinkle recalled so many in her family that had cancer, one after the other—aunts, uncles, cousins, mother, sister, and herself. She said: "My oldest daughter . . . says it's not a matter of if you get cancer, it's a matter of when."

Marjie Trujillo told me that of nine members of her family, six have cancer, and three died from it. The loss is tragic and so is the frustration. She said: "Many in our community feel our government has turned a deaf ear to our health issues."

I also heard from Virginia Duran. She was born in Tularosa in 1940 and lived on Padilla Lane. She told me that on the street where she lived, at least 10 people have had cancer. That is just one block.

Many families from the Tularosa Basin know this loss and pain. Nora Foltz is 71 years old. She is the only sibling of five who doesn't have cancer. Her sister, Helen Guerra, is 81 years old. Helen was diagnosed with kidney cancer 17 years ago. Helen's daughter Lupe had multiple illnesses and chronic pain and died at the age of 62.

There are so many stories—far too many stories—like this. As Gloria Herrera said, the Tularosa community has "shed enough tears to fill a lake."

It was my privilege to meet with these survivors. Their stories are courageous and troubling, but most troubling of all is the people who were not there, who were not able to speak, and those who have passed away over the last seven decades. We all speak for them now, and we will keep on speaking until justice is done.

The Tularosa Basin Downwinders Consortium is doing critical work. They are organizing the community, telling their stories, and making sure people listen and understand what happened. Tina Cordova is one of the many great advocates who are dedicated, committed, and refusing give up. Tina summed up the feelings of many when she told me: "We were the unknown, unwilling guinea pigs in the world's greatest experiment." I agree with Tina and the members of the consortium. Theirs is a tragic story. They suffered so that we could develop bombs and win wars. That is why I have again pushed for legislation with my colleagues—Senator CRAPO and several others—to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act and finally recognize the Trinity site and include New Mexicans who have suffered for decades. They deserve justice, they deserve compensation, and they are still waiting 70 years later.

We can't change the years that have passed, nor can we erase the years of illness and the pain endured by too many for too long, but fair compensation will make a difference and will provide badly needed help.

It took many years to create the original RECA Program. My father helped to lay the groundwork. He devoted many years to fighting in the courts for men, women, and children who were sick because they had lived downwind during nuclear tests. They were exposed to dangerous radiation. They should have been helped but were ignored instead.

I remember going with him to meet folks in St. George, UT, in 1978. I was just out of law school. There were about 40 or 50 survivors there. They loved their country and trusted their government. They were hesitant to speak out. They did not seek special treatment, but they were wounded people. Caught in the fallout of the nuclear age, they had a right to be heard. My dad heard them, and he demanded that others hear them as well. He fought for them until the end of his life at 90 years old, first in the courts and then in the Congress. He worked with Senators Ted Kennedy and ORRIN HATCH—an unlikely match if ever there were one—and they kept pushing.

President H.W. Bush signed RECA into law 25 years ago in 1990. It was a bipartisan bill. It was driven by simple fairness and it was a historic step forward, but it left some folks behind, including the Downwinders in the Tularosa Basin.

My dad would not give up, the families he worked with would not give up, and we won't give up either. Our bill expands the downwind exposure area to include seven States from the Trinity and Nevada test sites, and it also includes Guam from the Pacific site. It would also allow compensation for post-1971 uranium workers and fund a critical public health study for those who live and work in uranium development communities.

I will continue to push for this legislation. It is the right thing to do, and we should get it done, which is why I will again join my Senate colleagues in sending a letter to the Judiciary Committee to request a hearing on this important bill.

Many families in New Mexico have been hurt, and they worry there is more harm to come. When I was in Tularosa this month, I spoke with a woman named Louisa Lopez. Her husband has mantle cell lymphoma. They know at least 17 other people who have cancer or who have died from it. She said, "We fear passing this on to our children, future grandchildren, and other generations."

This weekend, there will be a candlelight vigil in Tularosa. Folks will gather, as they do every year now. They will stand together as candles flicker in the warm New Mexico night. They will remember those who have been brought down by cancer and other radiation-related diseases. They will remember those who have passed away. They will remember that a wrong was done and has yet to be righted. And they will offer prayers and support for those who continue to struggle.

Rosemary Cordova told me in Tularosa:

We can't bring back those we've lost, but we can support those still suffering. All we're asking is that our government face up to the wrong that has been done . . . that someday soon our government will do what should [have] been done long ago.

It takes courage to speak out. It takes courage to speak truth to power. These folks are heroes, and on this 70th anniversary, I want to say to them: Thank you. Thank you for making your voices heard. Thank you for making your stories known. And thank you for refusing to give up. I will not give up, either. Together, we will keep working for fairness, and the day will come when we can stand together in Tularosa and light the candles of remembrance and finally say justice has been done.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Tennessee, Mr. CORKER, and I

be permitted to engage in a short colloquy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### SHOOTING IN CHATTANOOGA

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the details are still coming in, but earlier today, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m., there was a violent attack in Chattanooga, where Senator CORKER was once mayor. Right now Federal, State, and local officials are responding in Tennessee.

I am deeply disturbed by the reports. We understand that the shooting took place at the Naval Reserve Center in Chattanooga and that a police officer has been injured. We also understand that other individuals at the Naval Reserve Center may have been injured as well. Many local businesses, schools, and hospitals are locked down.

I have been in touch with Federal, State, and local officials and will continue to monitor the situation closely. My thoughts and prayers are with all of those involved.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I wish to join our senior Senator in expressing our deep sorrow for those who have been affected and extending our thoughts and prayers to the families. Details are still emerging. We believe this took place in multiple locations, and I know the local representatives there are dealing with this effectively as they move ahead.

I thank the Senator for having us take the time right now to express our sorrow and support for those who are dealing with this issue. I hope those who were injured will survive and end up having full lives, but we know some people were tragically injured. I appreciate the reach-out that has taken place at the local, State, and Federal level to ensure that we are aware of what is occurring.

With that, I yield the floor.

#### CHARTER SCHOOL AUTHORIZING LANGUAGE

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to enter into a colloquy with Senator ALEXANDER.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. FLAKE. As the Senate prepares to vote on the Every Child Achieves Act, I wish to commend Senator ALEXANDER for working with me to include language regarding charter school authorizers in the substitute amendment language.

A charter school authorizer is an entity approved by the State legislature and is responsible for establishing charter schools' academic and accountability standards, among other things. State charter laws vary from State to State in regards to how and to whom authorizers are subject to accountability. For example, a State with independent or multiple authorizers gives entities other than local education boards or the State board, the authority to approve charter schools. These entities are typically outside the traditional education structure of a state and can include independent,

statewide charter school boards, or colleges and universities. According to the Center for Education Reform, "there is a direct correlation between States with multiple authorizers and higher student achievement." Out of 44 State laws, 21 States have created independent authorizers.

The language in the underlying Every Child Achieves Act encouraged States applying for grants to Support High-Quality Charter Schools (Sec. 5103) to establish authorizing standards of an authorized public chartering agency, despite the fact that some States don't have any explicit authority over charter school authorizing. This language didn't take into consideration the variation of State by State authorizing structures for charter schools and required that the Federal Government, not States, dictate how and what charter authorizing agencies must do to demonstrate success. In addition, subjecting charter schools to the same rules governing traditional public institutions would make them identical to the very entities that charter schools were meant to provide an alternative to.

The language that Chairman ALEXANDER and I worked with, and ultimately included in the substitute, recognizes that some States have elected to use multiple or independent authorizers and ensures that those States don't have to add an additional layer of bureaucracy to receive grants under the Every Child Achieves Act.

This bill goes a long way in recognizing that Washington cannot be a national school board, and that is why it is imperative that the Federal Government continue to encourage States to determine their own authorizing standards and learn what works best for their students.

The Center for Education Reform, a leading organization promoting charter education supported the language in the substitute explaining ". . . Charter schools are public schools, which are free from many onerous rules but accountable for performance to their authorizers, which vary State by State. The substitute ensures respect for those individual differences State by State as well as the hard work they are doing to ensure the proliferation of quality schooling option for all children."

I commend Chairman ALEXANDER for his hard work on this legislation, and for working with me to ensure States, not the Federal Government, are determining charter authorizing standards.

Senator ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I thank Senator FLAKE for his hard work to ensure that charter schools and their authorizers continue to operate with the flexibility needed for them to thrive. Charter schools are public schools that provide more choices for parents to improve their children's future and more freedom for teachers and principals to increase the academic performance of their students. The Every Child Achieves Act

supports charter schools in many ways by solidifying Federal support for expanding and replicating high-quality charter schools with a demonstrated record of success, giving States more flexibility to invest in new school models and encouraging them to strengthen charter school authorizing practices. The language championed by Senator FLAKE will promote quality charter authorizing activities without imposing layers of Federal bureaucracy and structures that are incompatible with State practices and laws. As we fix a law that has effectively resulted in 100,000 public schools being controlled by a National School Board in the U.S. Department of Education, it is important to recognize the variance in State laws governing charter schools and empower States to determine their own quality standards.

Today, nearly 2.9 million students—6 percent of U.S. public school students—were enrolled in approximately 6,700 charter schools, and just over the past year, charter school enrollment has grown by over 14 percent, or an additional 348,000 students. I commend Senator FLAKE on his actions to strengthen the program and to promote better State charter school policies and activities that help high quality charter schools continue to grow and flourish.

#### AMENDMENT NO. 2161

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, when all students have the chance to learn, we strengthen our future workforce. Our country grows stronger. We empower the next generation of Americans to lead the world. We create more opportunities for more families, and we help the economy grow from the middle out, not the top down.

But today, across the country, stark educational inequalities exist. The students in some schools simply don't have the same opportunity to graduate college-and-career ready like other students do. In our country, all students should have access to a quality public education, no matter where they live, how they learn, or how much money their parents make.

So that is why I am glad our bipartisan bill to fix No Child Left Behind has Federal protections to hold schools accountable for educating all students. And I will continue to fight for stronger protections as the bill moves forward.

But educating all students is a tall order if schools don't have the very resources that help students succeed. That is why it is so important to make sure States address inequalities in resources. Senators KIRK, REED, BALDWIN, and BROWN offered a bipartisan amendment that would help schools and States address persistent inequalities in resources and opportunities. I strongly urged my colleagues to support it.

Students do better in school when they have access to a well-rounded education. That includes rigorous coursework that helps prepare students for a college curriculum. It includes offering classes like arts, music, physical

education, and STEM education. It includes setting up effective school library programs that can inspire in kids a love for reading. Those classes and those programs create a school environment where students can learn and thrive.

But too many students across the country do not have access to those critical resources. And too often, it is students of color, kids with disabilities, English-language learners, and students from low-income backgrounds who have the least access to resources that can help them get ahead.

Take experienced teachers, for example. Students of color are more likely to have a teacher who is new to the profession. These students often don't have access to advanced classes and classes like art and music. Students of color are more likely than their White peers to go to a high school that does not offer AP classes. In fact, 20 percent of African-American high schoolers go to a high school that does not offer AP classes. And in 2008, White students were twice as likely to have access to arts education as African-American and Hispanic students.

The same inequality exists for access to technology. Students from low-income backgrounds often don't have access to the Internet or to computers, compared to their peers. A study from Stanford University put this into sharp focus. The researchers asked teachers if their students have the digital tools they need to effectively complete assignments at home. More than half of teachers from more affluent schools said yes. But just 3 percent of teachers from high-poverty schools said their students had access to tools like computers and the Internet.

All of this inequality holds students back. It widens achievement gaps. It robs students of the chance to learn and excel in the classroom. And we need to do something about it, so all students have the opportunity to learn.

We have made important progress in the Every Child Achieves Act. Under the current bill, school districts will already be required to report on: access to safe and healthy school environments, per-pupil expenditures, access to advanced coursework, the number of children enrolled in preschool, and teacher qualifications. And that is a good step in the right direction.

But this bipartisan amendment would take the next step. First, it would expand the list of resource indicators to include things like access to art and music and dedicated school library programs. And it would give States a choice on which resources will be the most meaningful in their communities.

Most importantly, this amendment would help States remedy opportunity gaps across school districts. It does this by requiring States to create a plan to improve access to resources in the schools that lack those tools. And because the plans will be designed by the States and must include input from

the communities, these plans will be tailored to fit the needs of local school districts. And States would be required to disaggregate the data on how resources are distributed by income, race, language proficiency, and disability. That will shine a light on if some groups of students are not getting the kinds of opportunities as others. And it will help parents know which resources their local schools offer and where the gaps are.

In short, this amendment will help strengthen our commitment to providing a quality education to all students. This amendment is also important for another key reason. Of course, nearly everyone agrees that the current law, No Child Left Behind, is badly broken. And one of the main reasons is that it placed an almost singular focus on test scores for reading and math. But test scores do not paint the whole picture of how a school is performing.

This amendment would give parents and communities a more holistic view to determine if a school is providing a quality learning environment for all students. And most importantly, this will help States focus resources on traditionally underserved populations so they will get the supports they need to succeed.

Now, some of my Republican colleagues have argued that we don't need this amendment because States and school districts should be responsible for solving resource disparities. But for too long, States and school districts have gotten off the hook for stark inequality. That is why we have seen the persistent inequality of some schools simply not getting the resources they need to help their students succeed. And that needs to end.

This amendment would not tell States how to address inequality. But it would require them to identify the disparities that exist and to create a plan to address them. That is why this amendment would be a good step in the right direction.

I know that others have argued that simply reporting the disparities between resources would be enough. But acknowledging the problem won't necessarily solve the problem. And on something as important as ensuring that students have equal opportunities to succeed, we need action. And that is why I believe it is so important that this amendment would help States act to address inequalities.

This isn't just important for student success in the classroom. It has long-term implications for our country. When some students don't have the chance to graduate from high school college-and-career ready, we lose out on the full potential of our Nation's future workforce, entrepreneurs, and leaders. In the years to come, our economy will rely on the students of today being able to take on and create the jobs of the 21st century economy. We can help States and school districts make sure all students have the re-

sources that defines a quality education by supporting this bill and this amendment. These resources are fundamental to student success—in school and in the future. So I urge my colleagues to support this amendment to address resources equity.

AMENDMENT NO. 2247, AS MODIFIED

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, today I wish to talk about my reasons for voting against Senator BARR's amendment to change the title I formula and on cloture to cut off debate on the Every Child Achieves Act.

The bill before us is not perfect, but it is a step in the right direction towards giving all kids a shot at quality education and fixing the failures of No Child Left Behind. I support a number of the provisions in this bill, including raising academic standards for students, supporting teachers with additional development tools, and providing resources to the lowest performing schools.

However, the bill also includes an amendment offered by Senator BARR to change the title I formula, which would drastically and negatively affect Maryland. Every single school district in my State would have lost money.

I could not let that happen. So I rolled up my sleeves and got to work. I formed a coalition with other Senators whose students—like mine—would lose under this amendment. The amendment was eventually changed. Now it says that any funds Congress appropriates for title I above \$17 billion will be subject to a new formula. Since title I is currently funded at \$14.5 billion, the new formula will not kick in at any time soon and Maryland won't lose any of its funds.

I am happy that I saved Maryland from losing \$40 million, but the language sets a terrible precedent. It penalizes States that do right by their students and their schools. As the Senator for Maryland, I can't support any formula that could cause Maryland to lose Federal dollars in the future—even one labeled a "compromise." As vice chairwoman of the Senate Appropriations Committee, I cannot support any disincentive to fully fund title I when additional funds would harm Maryland.

As long as this amendment is included, I cannot vote to move this bill forward and will vote no on cloture.

Ms. CANTWELL. Mr. President, I rise today to voice my support for the Every Child Achieves Act. I would like to thank Senator ALEXANDER and Senator MURRAY for their hard work on this legislation. This bipartisan bill offers an opportunity for real progress in educating our children.

The Every Child Achieves Act takes an important step forward in updating the badly broken No Child Left Behind Act. This reauthorization is greatly needed to support Washington State's students, educators, and families. Currently in Washington, our schools must still comply with the original and most onerous requirements of No Child Left Behind since our flexibility waiver was

revoked in 2014. The Every Child Achieves Act would end the States' need for waivers and provide them with greater flexibility to come up with state-led education plans.

I have visited a number of schools in Washington and I have heard from so many of my constituents about the need to improve this law to better support our Nation's teachers and students. I am pleased that the Senate was able to have this important debate that is critical to our Nation's progress.

Today, we live in a global economy and our children are not only competing with other students in the United States but with students across the world. Therefore, I am particularly interested in science, technology, engineering, and math education to keep American students competitive in the 21st century. Washington State ranks first in the Nation in the concentration of STEM-related jobs, and it is essential that we invest in our future workforce.

The Every Child Achieves Act includes an important dedicated funding stream to support partnerships between schools, businesses, universities, and nonprofit organizations to support student achievement and teacher training in STEM subjects. I am a strong supporter of these partnerships and I am pleased that the bill also includes a provision with an emphasis on increasing access to STEM subjects for women, minorities, economically disadvantaged students, and other groups that are frequently underrepresented in STEM subjects.

Additionally, I am pleased that this bill includes a new competitive grant program championed by my colleague, Senator MURRAY, to enable States to improve early childhood learning. I long have supported early childhood learning due to its importance to developing young minds and intelligence. These grants would target resources for low- and moderate-income families.

There are few programs more important than early childhood education in preparing children to succeed. I am proud to be a cosponsor of Senator CASEY's Strong Start for America's Children amendment, which I regret did not receive enough votes for adoption. This would have established a partnership between the Federal Government and the States to fund high-quality kindergarten programs for low- and moderate-income families.

Washington State has been on the fore-front of early education and since 2006, the Department of Early Learning has ensured that Washington students have access to high-quality learning opportunities, so that they are prepared for kindergarten and a successful school career. According to the Washington State Department of Early Learning, there is clear and convincing science that early childhood is a critical time for mental development. Economists and social scientists have found that for every \$1 invested in

high-quality early learning, at least \$3 are returned in reduced costs for remedial education, public safety, health care, and other social spending. I would call this a good return on investment.

In closing, I would like to commend my colleague Senator MURRAY for her leadership and for her steadfast commitment to ensure that STEM education and early childhood education were included in the Every Child Achieves Act. I was happy to partner with her on these efforts. I urge my colleagues to support these important investments in our Nation's education system.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Is it time to vote?

CLOTURE MOTION

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Pursuant to rule XXII, the Chair lays before the Senate the pending cloture motion, which the clerk will state.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

CLOTURE VOTE

We, the undersigned Senators, in accordance with the provisions of rule XXII of the Standing Rules of the Senate, do hereby move to bring to a close debate on S. 1177, an original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves.

Mitch McConnell, Lisa Murkowski, Pat Roberts, Lamar Alexander, Cory Gardner, Steve Daines, Johnny Isakson, Susan M. Collins, Michael B. Enzi, Kelly Ayotte, John Cornyn, Orrin G. Hatch, Richard Burr, Thom Tillis, Lindsey Graham, John Hoeven, Bill Cassidy.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. By unanimous consent, the mandatory quorum call has been waived.

The question is, Is it the sense of the Senate that debate on S. 1177, an original bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 to ensure that every child achieves, as amended, shall be brought to a close?

The yeas and nays are mandatory under the rule.

The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senators are necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM) and the Senator from Florida (Mr. RUBIO).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. HOEVEN). Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The yeas and nays resulted—yeas 79, nays 18, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 248 Leg.]

YEAS—79

Alexander	Fischer	Murkowski
Ayotte	Flake	Murray
Baldwin	Franken	Perdue
Barrasso	Gardner	Peters
Bennet	Grassley	Portman
Blumenthal	Hatch	Reed
Boozman	Heinrich	Reid
Boxer	Heitkamp	Roberts
Brown	Heller	Rounds
Burr	Hirono	Sanders
Cantwell	Hoeben	Schatz
Capito	Inhofe	Scott
Carper	Isakson	Sessions
Casey	Johnson	Shaheen
Cassidy	Kaine	Stabenow
Coats	King	Sullivan
Cochran	Kirk	Tester
Collins	Klobuchar	Thune
Coons	Lankford	Tillis
Corker	Leahy	Toomey
Cornyn	Manchin	Udall
Cotton	Markey	Warner
Donnelly	McCain	Whitehouse
Durbin	McCaskill	Wicker
Enzi	McConnell	Wyden
Ernst	Menendez	
Feinstein	Merkley	

NAYS—18

Blunt	Gillibrand	Risch
Booker	Lee	Sasse
Cardin	Mikulski	Schumer
Crapo	Moran	Shelby
Cruz	Murphy	Vitter
Daines	Paul	Warren

NOT VOTING—3

Graham	Nelson	Rubio
--------	--------	-------

The PRESIDING OFFICER. On this vote, the yeas are 79, the nays are 18.

Three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn having voted in the affirmative, the motion is agreed to.

Under the previous order, there is now 4 minutes of debate equally divided between Senators ALEXANDER and MURRAY.

The Senator from Washington.

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I first want to thank Chairman ALEXANDER for working with me on the Every Child Achieves Act. He has been a great partner in getting us to this point with this bill. This process started when he and I agreed that No Child Left Behind is badly broken and needs to be fixed. Our bill, the Every Child Achieves Act, is an important step forward to do just that.

The current law overemphasized test scores. Our bill will give States flexibility to use multiple measures, not just test scores, to determine how well a school is performing. Our bill also eliminates the one-size-fits-all provisions of No Child Left Behind that have been so damaging for our schools and our districts. Instead, it allows our communities, our parents, and our teachers to work together to improve schools and ensure that every child can get a well-rounded education.

Our bill maintains Federal protections to help students graduate from high school with the tools they need to compete and lead in the 21st century economy. This is a good bill. I will keep working, of course, to make it better—even after our vote today—in conference.

I hope we can continue to build on the Senate's strong bipartisan work. I will continue to push to strengthen the accountability measures in our bill and

address inequality in schools. But today I urge my colleagues to vote to pass the Every Child Achieves Act that will give all students the chance to learn and grow and thrive. Let's fix No Child Left Behind. Let's prove that Congress can break through gridlock and work together. Let's pass this bill for students, parents, teachers, and communities across the country.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent for an extra minute if I need it.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, Senator MURRAY suggested we work on this in a bipartisan way. I took her advice. It was good advice. This is the result. We have had 100 amendments in committee and on the floor. We have had excellent process. I thank the majority leader. I thank Senator REID, the Democratic leader, for creating an environment to do that.

Now, let me say this about the vote we are about to have. This is a law that everybody wants fixed. We have a consensus on that. We have a consensus on how to fix it: keep the important measurements of academic achievement and turn the rest of it over to the States, to classroom teachers, and others who are closest to the children. That is what the Governors, that is what the superintendents, that is what the teachers organizations have said to us. They want us to fix it. They support the way we are proposing to fix it.

Now, in the last few years, we have created in this country, in effect, a national school board. It has made it harder to have better teaching, harder to set higher standards, harder to have real accountability in the States. So we changed that. We reversed the trend toward the national school board. We end the common core mandate. We end the waivers that the U.S. Department of Education is using to run public schools. We end DC evaluating teachers. We end adequate yearly progress.

Some are saying vote no because you should go further. Well, we had a chance to go further. We voted for the Daines amendment, the Scott amendment, and the Alexander amendment. That would have gotten us 90 percent of what we wanted. We got about 45 votes, so we didn't get anything. This gets us about 80 percent of what we want. A President named Reagan used to say: If you got 80 percent of what you wanted, you might take it and fight for the rest on another day. I am recommending we follow this advice.

If we vote no today, that means we leave the Common Core mandate right where it is. That means the waivers are still running your schools. That means adequate yearly progress is determined from Washington, DC, not in your hometown, and that means Washington, DC, is evaluating your teachers. Everybody wants this law fixed. If

you vote no, we fix nothing. We fix nothing. So no means we haven't fixed anything. So vote yes. Do what the Governors, do what the superintendents, do what the teachers say we ought to do. They all agree on that. This is the most important step in that direction we have had in 25 years. Let's not miss the opportunity. Vote to restore to the people closest to the children the responsibility for their education. Vote yes for local control of public schools.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed for a third reading and was read the third time.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the bill having been read the third time, the question is, Shall it pass?

Mrs. MURRAY. Mr. President, I ask for the yeas and nays.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there a sufficient second?

There is a sufficient second.

The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk called the roll.

Mr. CORNYN. The following Senator is necessarily absent: the Senator from South Carolina (Mr. GRAHAM).

Mr. DURBIN. I announce that the Senator from Florida (Mr. NELSON) is necessarily absent.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Are there any other Senators in the Chamber desiring to vote?

The result was announced—yeas 81, nays 17, as follows:

[Rollcall Vote No. 249 Leg.]

YEAS—81

Alexander	Feinstein	Merkley
Ayotte	Fischer	Mikulski
Baldwin	Franken	Murkowski
Barrasso	Gardner	Murray
Bennet	Gillibrand	Perdue
Blumenthal	Grassley	Peters
Boozman	Hatch	Portman
Boxer	Heinrich	Reed
Brown	Heitkamp	Reid
Burr	Heller	Roberts
Cantwell	Hirono	Rounds
Capito	Hoeven	Sanders
Cardin	Inhofe	Schatz
Carper	Isakson	Schumer
Casey	Johnson	Sessions
Cassidy	Kaine	Shaheen
Coats	King	Stabenow
Cochran	Kirk	Sullivan
Collins	Klobuchar	Tester
Cooms	Lankford	Thune
Corker	Leahy	Tillis
Cornyn	Manchin	Toomey
Cotton	Markey	Udall
Donnelly	McCain	Warner
Durbin	McCaskill	Whitehouse
Enzi	McConnell	Wicker
Ernst	Menendez	Wyden

NAYS—17

Blunt	Lee	Sasse
Booker	Moran	Scott
Crapo	Murphy	Shelby
Cruz	Paul	Vitter
Daines	Risch	Warren
Flake	Rubio	

NOT VOTING—2

Graham Nelson

The bill (S. 1177), as amended, was passed.

(The bill, as amended, will be printed in a future edition of the RECORD.)

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Tennessee.

MORNING BUSINESS

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate be in a period of morning business, with Senators permitted to speak therein for up to 10 minutes each.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senator from Washington and I be permitted to speak for as much time as we require.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

EVERY CHILD ACHIEVES ACT

Mr. ALEXANDER. Mr. President, the vote was 81 to 17. What that says to me and should say to the American people is that not only is there a consensus in this country that everybody wants to fix No Child Left Behind, that is the consensus we began with. Not only was there consensus in the Senate's education committee about how to fix it—which was unanimous in a 22-member committee that includes Members who are about as diverse as you could find in the Senate—the entire Senate has a consensus on how to fix it.

The Senator from Washington and I were just talking. This is a complicated piece of legislation. There are crocodiles in every corner, any of which could have made it difficult for this bill to succeed. For the Senate to take a look at the 100,000 schools in this country for the 50 million children and the 3.5 million teachers and say, "We hear you. We know you want to end the confusion, the anxiety, and the feeling that you are not in charge of your own children. We hear you. We have listened to you, and we have come up with a solution with which you agree"—and that we voted by a vote of 81 to 17 is a remarkable event.

So we have a remarkable consensus that No Child Left Behind needed to be fixed. We had a remarkable consensus on how to fix it in the committee. There are not many times on a bill this difficult and this encompassing that we have a consensus this remarkable—81 to 17—in the Senate. I mentioned in my earlier remarks the importance of the Senate in this way.

Someone said the Senate is the one authentic piece of genius in the American political system. The only claim we would have to that exalted description would be that we are the only part of our government that is created for the express purpose of developing consensus. The House of Representatives is America's sounding board. The country moves suddenly, the House moves suddenly. Our job is to take all the different points of view and to consult with each other and to see whether we can create the kind of consensus so that when people look at the Senate and see a result, they may say: Well, I am not sure I agree with every single thing they did, but if 81 Senators of