CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1177, STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. JUDY CHU

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Ms. JUDY CHU of California. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns with S. 1177—the Every Student Succeeds Act. I cast my vote in favor of the Every Student Succeeds Act because I believe it is an improvement from No Child Left Behind (NCLB), our nation's current law. However, I strongly believe this legislation falls short in many areas—specifically resource equity, federal authority, and data disaggregation for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students.

While I am pleased that S. 1177 requires schools where students are consistently struggling to report on resource inequities, it does not hold states accountable for these inequities. States with dramatic investment disparities will be required only to identify gaps, not necessarily to close them.

Additionally, this legislation significantly limits secretarial authority by relinquishing much of the responsibility for monitoring and enforcing protections for vulnerable students from the federal government to the states. History shows us that strong federal oversight compelled states to identify and address achievement gaps faced by minority and low-income students. Without this strong oversight, I am concerned that these vulnerable groups will once again fall through the cracks.

Finally, I am very disappointed that S. 1177 does not require that data collected and reported on AAPI students be disaggregated by ethnic subgroups. As the Chair of the Congressional Asian Pacific American Caucus (CAPAC), I have worked to combat the so-called ''model minority myth,'' which leads people to believe that AAPI students are all high-achieving and successful. In reality, the AAPI population includes over 40 distinct ethnic groups who speak over 100 different languages. However, this diversity in experience and success is often masked when data is not disaggregated by AAPI subgroups. As a result, many AAPI students fail to receive resources that would help them succeed academically.

I believe that S. 1177 is an improvement over the patchwork system our country is currently operating under in the wake of NCLB, but it falls short on the promise to serve all of our children. I will continue to work to ensure that every child, regardless of economic background, race, gender, sexual orientation, family history, or ability receives a free, high-quality education that enables them to achieve the American Dream.

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SPEECH OF

HON. BONNIE WATSON COLEMAN

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mrs. WATSON COLEMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). It has been 14 years since the last reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, and we have desperately needed an update to this critical law. The 2001 No Child Left Behind Act included unworkable provisions and led to the proliferation of high-stakes testing. In order to manage the impact of the law's strict provisions, the federal government has granted waivers to 40 states, resulting in unpredictability and unequal application of the law. The ESSA will correct our previous mistakes by maintaining high standards while giving states and local school districts greater flexibility in achieving them with evidence-based strategies.

At its core, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act is a civil rights law that reflects our society's consensus that every state and school district must provide a quality education to all children. In order to fulfill this promise, we must have sufficient information to measure inequities in educational achievement for all groups, and we must ensure states and local governments are taking the steps necessary to close those achievement gaps. For that reason, I am very concerned that the ESSA lacks data disaggregation for Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students. The AAPI community is extremely diverse with over 48 distinct ethnic groups that face varying challenges in educational achievement. The lack of data disaggregation will prevent us from determining what gaps exist and how best to address them.

Additionally, I am concerned by the lack of key provisions from the Safe Schools Improvement Act and the Student Non-Discrimination Act. I have cosponsored these important pieces of legislation because more must be done to address the harmful effects of bullying and discrimination, particularly for LGBT students. No child should be denied a quality education due to his or her race, ethnicity, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socioeconomic status. This bill takes important steps in the right direction, but the lack of AAPI data disaggregation and important LGBT protections shows there is much work to be done to achieve this goal. I look forward to working with my colleagues to address these flaws.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON S. 1177, STUDENT SUCCESS ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. ROBERT C. ''BOBBY'' SCOTT

OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 2, 2015

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, as I've stated before, this conference report is not the bill I would have written on my own. It is a product of compromise, but a product that did not require either side to compromise on our core beliefs. A core belief of mine—and a core belief of my caucus—is that Congress deems authority to the executive branch to interpret, implement, and enforce federal law. That is the foundational tenet of administrative law.

Although some provisions included in the conference report seek to limit the regulatory power of the Department of Education, nothing in this conference report will inhibit or impede the Secretary's authority—as granted by the Constitution—to interpret, implement, and enforce compliance with the Federal law, including the Secretary's authority to promulgate regulations that clarify and interpret vague statutory terms. Those provisions were carefully negotiated between the Chair and me.

The Every Student Succeeds Act provides states with new flexibility to design systems that hold schools accountable for improving student outcomes, but the Federal government is ultimately responsible for protecting the civil rights of all students. To fulfill that responsibility, the Secretary of Education will maintain regulatory, oversight, and enforcement authority sufficient to fully implement this new law.

HONORING THE DAMASCUS HIGH SCHOOL SWARMIN' HORNETS

HON. JOHN K. DELANEY

OF MARYLAND

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. DELANEY. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the Damascus High School Swarmin' Hornets for capturing the 2015 Maryland Class 3A State Football Championship last week in Baltimore. The victory by Damascus capped a perfect 14–0 season and is the school's eighth state championship. I'd like to congratulate the Swarmin' Hornets, Coach Eric Wallich and his staff, and everyone associated with the team who made this championship season possible.

The Swarmin' Hornets defeated Dundalk 55–14, a dominating victory that included a record-setting performance by running back Jake Funk, who broke the state mark for touchdowns in a championship game. The team also set the state record for the most points scored in a season. As the Washington Post headline made clear, the Swarmin' Hornets left ''no doubt'' that they were the best team in the state.

Importantly, the team reached these heights after facing adversity and heartbreak. Last season, the team was defeated in the championship game, but rebounded with an even stronger performance in 2015. That experience—working together for months to persevere and accomplish a goal even after a painful setback—will inform and inspire the young people who compose this team for years to come.

The Damascus community is extremely proud of their team and their achievement, excellence and perseverance should be permanently reflected in the official record of the House of Representatives.

HONORING THE LIFE AND LEGACY OF SHELDON SCHLESINGER

HON. ALCEE L. HASTINGS

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, December 9, 2015

Mr. HASTINGS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the life and legacy of my dear, longtime friend Mr. Sheldon ''Shelly'' Schlesinger of Broward County, Florida, who sadly passed away on Wednesday, December 2nd at age 85. Shelly was born in Brooklyn, New York, and later moved to Florida where he attended the University of Miami and the University of Miami School of Law, and met his wife of 60 years Barbara.