

## Praise for HELP Committee's Bipartisan Bill to Fix No Child Left Behind

Written by Sen. Tom Harkin  
Tuesday, 25 October 2011 14:46

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WASHINGTON—Last week, the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, chaired by Senator Tom Harkin (D-IA), approved a bipartisan bill to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act by a vote of 15-7. The legislation overhauls the No Child Left Behind Act and ensures that every child in Iowa and across the country receives a great education that prepares them to succeed in college and a career in the global economy. Below are comments on the legislation from education leaders in Iowa and around the country.

Chris Bern, President, Iowa State Education Association:

“I commend Senator Harkin’s leadership in conducting bipartisan negotiations around this legislation that will have a significant effect on the quality of education students receive in Iowa’s public schools.”

Karen Rowan, President, Iowa Parent-Teacher Association

“Iowa PTA, on behalf of more than 10,000 parents, teachers, and child advocates across the state, is hopeful that comprehensive reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act will be completed this year. We applaud Senator Harkin and Senator Enzi for their leadership to fix No Child Left Behind, and look forward to working with the Committee to make needed improvements to the bill.”

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Tracey Mavis, President, Iowa Head Start Association:

"Iowa Head Start Association is pleased with the results of the HELP committee Bipartisan bill to fix No Child Left Behind. Senator Harkin has always been a Champion for Children and by his work on this bill shows that he is a driving force for all children. This bill will fix the one-size-fits-all approach created by the No Child Left Behind Act, support great teachers and principals, and ensure that all children receive the best instruction, help ensure that every student graduates from high school ready for college and a career, focus the federal government's role on the things it does best, while giving states and communities the flexibility they need to address the unique needs of their students and schools. These changes will help strengthen child education and help move this country forward."

MJ Dolan, Executive Director, Iowa Association of Community College Trustees:

"Iowa's Community Colleges support the bipartisan focus of this bill on establishing career and college readiness standards with high quality assessments for students. We believe this legislation will assist in developing a K-12 educational system where every student has the opportunity to succeed. Moving forward with a comprehensive reform package will enable the U.S. to remain globally competitive with our international counterparts. IACCT looks forward to continuing its partnerships with the elementary and secondary education community to end remediation and support students in their pursuit of postsecondary education through innovative and effective partnerships. We hope that Congress moves forward quickly with this legislation."

Mark Shriver, Save the Children:

"On behalf of Save the Children's U.S. Programs, I am proud to endorse the Harkin/Enzi Reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act. This bipartisan legislation provides important reforms for education policy, including a long overdue recognition of the needs of children in rural America. I urge the Senate to move forward as soon as possible and work with their colleagues in the House to produce a final bipartisan bill."

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Deborah Smolover, Executive Director, America Forward:

"The America Forward Education Coalition is pleased with the Senate HELP Committee's decision to vote a bipartisan education bill out of committee. This bill is a critical first step in moving education reform forward. We are grateful to Chairman Harkin, Ranking Member Enzi and HELP Committee Senators who voted in favor of passage for their leadership in the effort to ensure all of our nation's children receive a quality education. As nonprofit organizations who work as partners to schools in communities throughout the country to improve educational outcomes for our nation's students, we support provisions throughout the bill that incentivize partnerships with effective nonprofit organizations. We also support competitive funding streams that have been included like Race to the Top, Investing in Innovation and Promise Neighborhoods. We will continue to work to ensure these vital provisions remain in the bill as it is considered on the Senate floor. We applaud the Senate HELP Committee's action to move this bipartisan bill, demonstrating what is possible when we put politics aside and focus on the urgent needs of our country's students."

Gov. Bob Wise, President, Alliance for Excellent Education:

"The Senate's action today is particularly important for the nation's high schools. Over 40 percent of the nation's dropouts come from 12 percent of high schools, and, under NCLB, federal education policy did very little to turn around these schools... The bill will help to ensure that the high school diplomas students receive are meaningful—and businesses, parents and the community will know that the diploma is meaningful. Building on the work of states across the country, the legislation calls for college and career-ready standards. By raising standards and holding students to high expectations, the nation will help prepare its students for the competitive future that lies ahead."

Jason Grumet, President, Bipartisan Policy Center:

"Yesterday, the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee reached a bipartisan agreement to advance legislation that would overhaul the No Child Left Behind Program. We at BPC commend Chairman Tom Harkin, Ranking Member Michael Enzi and their fellow committee members on their willingness to overcome partisan differences in the service of a greater good, and to demonstrate that consensus between the two parties is still possible... It is imperative that Republicans and Democrats continue to show the type of leadership displayed by the members of the HELP committee. Breaking through the wall of

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partisanship on difficult issues is vital to ensuring the future health of our country and to addressing the cynicism and discontent with Congress so evident in poll after poll.”

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