

**Bob Wise**  
**Governor of West Virginia, 2001–2005**



February 27, 2012

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
House Committee on Education and the Workforce  
United States House of Representatives  
2101 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Ranking Member Miller:

The Alliance for Excellent Education is pleased to support your amendment to the Student Success Act (H.R. 3989). As introduced, this bill threatens bipartisan gains for the nation's high schools made under the Bush and Obama administrations. The Alliance encourages members to vote in favor of your proposal. In particular, the Alliance is appreciative of the following provisions:

- **College- and Career-Ready Standards:** Education content standards form the basis of the nation's education system. By calling for college- and career-ready standards, your amendment reinforces the work being led by states to raise standards and improve the quality of public education. In doing so, your amendment helps to ensure that every child receives a world-class education that will prepare him or her for the competitive 21st century workforce, regardless of where he or she lives.
- **Graduation Rate Accountability:** For too long, states have calculated inconsistent graduation rates and have not adequately included graduation rates in their accountability systems. Your amendment codifies regulations implemented under President George W. Bush that ensure all high schools utilize an accurate graduation rate calculation and pursue rigorous but achievable improvements in their graduation rates.
- **Accountability for All Schools:** Other proposals for the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) limit federal accountability to a small percentage of low performing schools. Your amendment holds all schools accountable for student performance, while ensuring that specific attention is paid to the nation's lowest performing high schools. Considering that these high schools produce over 40 percent of the nation's dropouts, it is critical that resources and reform are targeted toward their improvement.
- **School Improvement:** Current law imposes a one-size-fits-all policy on low performing schools that is neither appropriate nor effective for the nation's high schools. Your amendment implements a system of differentiated improvement that would benefit the thousands of students in low performing schools across the country.

The federal government has a limited but critical role to play in ensuring that all students have the opportunity to receive a college- and career-ready education. Your amendment asserts an appropriate federal role into education policy, one that is supportive and flexible while upholding the protections for underserved students that have been the hallmark of federal education policy since ESEA was first signed into law in 1965. The Alliance is pleased to support your amendment, and looks forward to working with you to ensure that every student has the opportunity to excel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Bob Wise".

Bob Wise  
President