



March 2, 2017

United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20015

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 1.6 million members of the American Federation of Teachers, I urge you to reject the repeal of the accountability and state plan regulations of the Every Student Succeeds Act through the Congressional Review Act (H.J. Res. 57 and S.J. Res. 25).

In November 2016, the previous administration issued final ESSA accountability regulations so that states, districts and schools had the tools and information they needed to successfully implement ESSA. That was the administration's job, and the timetable was established by the bipartisan Congress that overwhelmingly passed ESSA.

The ESSA regulations are not perfect—and when released, the AFT and many affiliates raised concerns. On balance, however, these regulations provide states with the flexibility promised under ESSA while maintaining important guardrails for equity and financial accountability. These regulations took a full year to create and were crafted with much stakeholder engagement, including input (both positive and negative) from thousands of educators and parents. And now, the states are deep in the process of developing state plans based on the template created to align with the current ESSA regulations.

Repealing these regulations now would not just be counterproductive and disruptive, but would demonstrate a disregard by Congress of school districts' operations and timelines. Districts are planning for their next school year right now. Delay reinforces that this law is being implemented in a top-down manner and that Washington is not listening to the needs of stakeholders—ironically, the opposite of what the large bipartisan majority intended in enacting ESSA.

The ESSA regulations are not a return to the rigid prescriptiveness of the No Child Left Behind era. Instead, they provide needed accountability for federal funding and enforcement of key civil rights protections for students. I urge you to reject a repeal of the ESSA accountability regulations.

Sincerely,

Randi Weingarten
President

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The **American Federation of Teachers** is a union of professionals that champions fairness; democracy; economic opportunity; and high-quality public education, healthcare and public services for our students, their families and our communities. We are committed to advancing these principles through community engagement, organizing, collective bargaining and political activism, and especially through the work our members do.

American Federation
of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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AFT PSRP
AFT Higher Education
AFT Public Employees
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