Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 4, 2014

The Honorable Jack Kingston
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor
Health and Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Kingston and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We ask that the Fiscal Year 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill include language to restore state decision-making and accountability with respect to state academic content standards. The decision about what students should be taught and when it should be taught has enormous consequences for our children. Therefore, parents ought to have a straight line of accountability to those who are making such decisions. Those decisions should be made at the state or local level, free from any pressure from the U.S. Department of Education.

We support eliminating further interference by the U.S. Department of Education with respect to state decisions on academic content standards by including the following language in the Fiscal Year 2015 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Bill:

(a) In General.—Funds appropriated under this Act or any prior Act shall not be used by the Secretary of Education—

(1) to require a State or local educational agency to develop or implement any set of academic content standards common to multiple States, including the Common Core State Standards developed under the Common Core State Standards Initiative, or any other specified set or type of academic content standards selected by the Secretary, or assessments aligned with such standards, including as a condition of approval of a State plan submitted to the Secretary, an application for a waiver issued by such Secretary under section 9401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7861), or as a condition of approval or competitive preference for an award of Federal funds under any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement;

(2) to establish any criterion that specifies, defines, or prescribes the standards or measures that a State or local educational agency uses to establish, implement, or improve academic content standards, academic achievement standards, academic assessments, accountability systems, systems that measure student growth, measures of other academic indicators, or teacher and principal evaluation systems; or

(3) to award any grant, contract, or cooperative agreement to a consortium of States that requires or specifically authorizes the development of assessments aligned with any set of academic content standards common to multiple States, including the Common Core State Standards developed under the Common Core State Standards Initiative, or any other specified set or type of academic content standards selected by the Secretary.

(b) Rule of Construction.—Nothing in subsection (a) shall be construed to limit the discretion

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

of an individual State or local education agency to use funds provided through a grant, contract, or cooperative agreement that does not otherwise violate subsection (a) for any purpose consistent with the terms of the grant, contract, or cooperative agreement, including the development or implementation of any set of content standards, assessments, or curricula that the State or local educational agency chooses to develop or implement without regard to a Federal requirement or incentive.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Steve King
Member of Congress

Walter B. Jones
Member of Congress

Rob Bishop
Member of Congress

Tim Huelskamp
Member of Congress

Paul Cook
Member of Congress

James Lankford
Member of Congress

Randy Hultgren
Member of Congress

Marsha Blackburn
Member of Congress

Louie Gohmert
Member of Congress

Trent Franks
Member of Congress

Mick Mulvaney
Member of Congress

Pete Olson
Member of Congress

Reid J. Ribble
Member of Congress

Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress

Jeff Duncan
Member of Congress

Paul C. Broun, M.D.
Member of Congress

Dan Benishek, M.D.
Member of Congress

Thomas Massie
Member of Congress

Mike Pompeo
Member of Congress

Kerry L. Bentivolio
Member of Congress

Steve Daines
Member of Congress

Justin Amash
Member of Congress

David B. McKinley
Member of Congress

Bill Posey
Member of Congress

Lynn Jenkins
Member of Congress

Kevin Cramer
Member of Congress

Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress

Rick Crawford
Member of Congress

Mark Sanford
Member of Congress

Robert E. Latta
Member of Congress

Joe Wilson
Member of Congress

Bob Gibbs
Member of Congress

Bill Flores
Member of Congress

Bill Johnson
Member of Congress

Scott Perry
Member of Congress