

more affluent districts with less need for such support.

The vast majority of the children affected by "portability," are black or Hispanic.

As legislators, as Americans, we have a generational responsibility to enhance the lives of those who will follow us, especially the most vulnerable.

H.R. 5 guts education funding, while diverting funds away from high-poverty schools by freezing funding at FY 2015 levels for six years, which represents over \$800 million in cuts to these programs compared to pre-sequester funding.

Mr. Chair, what does it say about our commitment to our youth that we are willing to cut funding for the future leaders of America?

For decades, we threw money at education without making sure our schools were actually improving, or whether we were giving teachers the tools they need, or whether our taxpayer dollars were being used effectively.

And our students too often paid the price.

The bill as it exists now allows for the establishment of separate, lower standards for students with developmental disabilities.

As a result of these standards, opportunities available for students with disabilities later in life would suffer considerably.

H.R. 5 converts much of the funding currently directed at English learners, migrant students, or at-risk students into block-grants, which would enable those funds to be spent outside the target populations.

Support for these students would also be eroded by suspending requirements that school districts improve the English-speaking ability of such students.

It is my concern as H.R. 5 is currently drafted abdicates the historic Federal role in elementary and secondary education of ensuring the educational progress of all of America's students, including students from low-income families, students with disabilities, English learners, and students of color.

'No Child Left Behind' needs to be fixed, but Republicans are pushing a bill that would gut education funding, eliminate and weaken protections for disadvantaged students, does not provide a well-rounded education for all students, and does not support educators.

The Statement of Administration Policy from the Obama administration agrees on the need for high-quality statewide annual testing as required in H.R. 5, so parents and teachers know how children and schools are doing from year to year and to allow for consistent measurement of school and student performance across the State.

However the administration has stated that this bill should do more to reduce redundant and unnecessary testing, such as asking States to limit the amount of time spent on standardized testing and requiring parental notification when testing is consuming too much classroom learning time.

In its current state the Obama administration recommends a veto of H.R. 5.

It is sobering to me, as the founder and co-chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus and someone who has long advocated on behalf of young people from all backgrounds, to see a bill that would have such a negative impact on the very children who need our help the most.

In addition to these sad truths, the bill currently under consideration would strike a devastating blow to our schools' ability to provide

the variety of programs that our children deserve.

It repeals dedicated funding for programs such as student safety, after and summer school programming, STEM education, education technology, arts education, literacy and block-grants support, forcing high-need districts to choose between funding vital services.

It should not be overlooked that one of these programs that is considered expendable is STEM-focused education, an area of importance both nationally and to my constituents in Houston.

The Houston region is one of the most important industrial bases in the world and was recently ranked the No. 1 U.S. manufacturing city by Manufacturers' News Inc.

Houston is also home to the largest medical complex in the world—the Texas Medical Center—and provides clinical health care, research and education at its 54 institutions.

These jobs, and truly the middle class of this decade as a whole, are dependent on workers who get the right STEM education and job training today.

Brookings' Metropolitan Policy Program's report "The Hidden STEM Economy" reported that in 2011, 26 million jobs or 20 percent of all occupations required knowledge in 1 or more STEM areas.

The same report stressed that fully half of all STEM jobs are available to workers without a 4 year degree and these jobs pay on average \$53,000 a year, which is 10 percent higher than jobs with similar education requirements.

To eliminate federal funding aimed at enhancing STEM education is to cripple an entire generation of America's youth, leaving them without skills that may be essential in securing their own future and the economic prosperity of our nation.

Finally, it must be addressed that the defining characteristic of our primary and secondary education system has been to prepare our students for college.

H.R. 5 does not contain any provisions that states consult with institutes of higher education in order to ensure that their academic standards are consistent with what will be demanded of those students once they graduate.

As a result, many students, even after receiving a high school diploma, will find themselves unprepared to pursue a college degree if they choose to.

We must look at the environments in which we are asking these students to succeed and ensure we have the best protections in place to provide safe educational institutions.

Amendment #93 of this bill, Jackson Lee Amendment, supports accountability-based programs and activities that are designed to enhance school safety, which may include research-based bullying prevention, cyberbullying prevention, disruption of recruitment activity by groups or individuals involved in violent extremism, and gang prevention programs as well as intervention programs regarding bullying.

H.R. 5 eliminates the current requirement that districts take action when their schools are under resourced and unable to meet the needs of all students.

Together with the lack of consideration and support for at-risk and low-income youth, this will result in those students being marginalized and denied educational opportunity rather than given the support and resources they so desperately need.

I urge all my colleagues to join with me and oppose the passage of H.R. 5.

CONGRATULATING ELDON HIGH SCHOOL ON ITS BRONZE MEDAL AWARD

HON. BLAINE LUETKEMEYER

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, July 13, 2015

Mr. LUETKEMEYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to ask my colleagues to join me in congratulating Eldon High School on its Bronze Medal Award as a top Missouri High School from U.S. News and World Report.

This school's administration, teachers, and students should be commended for all of their hard work throughout the past year and for their commitment to education.

I ask you to join me in recognizing Eldon High School for a job well done.

21ST CENTURY CURES ACT

SPEECH OF

HON. PETER A. DeFAZIO

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, July 9, 2015

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 6) to accelerate the discovery, development, and delivery of 21st century cures, and for other purposes:

Mr. DEFAZIO. Mr. Chair, federal funding for biomedical research has been stagnant over the past several years, another victim of unwise and shortsighted sequestration and budget cuts that put deficit reduction before investments that can save lives.

With no increase to counter the effects of inflation and increased cost of research, NIH has lost 22 percent of its purchasing power over the last decade. NIH has been forced to cut or deny funding for thousands of promising studies that could hold the key to incredible breakthroughs.

We should do everything we can to bring cures to patients as quickly as possible. Far too many people suffer from rare, serious and deadly diseases, and its outrageous cures could be found except for the lack of funding. It's also important we make sure drugs are safe and actually do what they are intended to do. I have concerns with some of the proposed changes to FDA's approval process designed to speed drugs and devices to market. We need to be certain that the proposed changes will not subject patients to a high level of risk. I expect the Senate will review and fix those provisions when they take up the bill.

HR. 6 does what Congress has been unable to do because the Republican majority refuses to understand a simple fact: Funding biomedical research, just like investing in our roads and bridges, is an investment, not wasteful spending.