

Under current law, the Secretary of Education is charged with approving the plan unless it does not meet the requirements of the law. That should be sufficient to tell the Secretary that he must approve a plan so long as it complies with the law.

However, given the current Secretary's track record, the language in this bill is more explicit. It requires the Secretary to deem a State plan approved within 90 days of its submission unless he can provide a detailed description of the specific requirements in law that the State did not comply with. It then lists three pages of explicit limitations on the Secretary's authority describing what he cannot consider in evaluating a State plan. That is then followed by a rule reemphasizing that the Secretary cannot require anything at all from States beyond what is in the law.

This bill also voids any conditions attached to waivers already granted by the Secretary of Education and prohibits the attaching of any new ones in the future.

I am also glad that this bill includes very comprehensive language I worked on with Senator ROBERTS to explicitly shut off all the avenues this administration has used to coerce States to adopt the common core standards. This will free States to adopt whatever content standards they choose based on the input from their citizens without Federal coercion or fear of Federal repercussions.

Too often, Congress passes vague laws that delegate excessive discretion to Federal agencies to fill in the blanks. This bill is an improvement over the standard practice. It makes congressional intent more clear and fills in many gaps to ensure that the Department implements the law as intended rather than based on the whims of the Secretary.

Some bipartisan compromise is necessary for any bill to pass the Senate, and like any compromise, most people can find some things they don't like in this bill. Some Senators feel this bill goes too far in reducing the Federal role in education and some Senators feel it doesn't go far enough. I am one of those Senators who would prefer to see a maximum degree of State and local control and I voted for amendments to that effect.

However, the Every Child Achieves Act is a step in the direction of reducing Federal control on local schools so teachers can teach and parents know who to hold accountable for decisions that affect their children. Given the current mess with an unworkable law on the books, many States ceding control over major policies to Washington in return for a waiver, and an unprecedented degree of Federal intervention into what happens in neighborhood schools, it is overdue for Congress to act. Local schools can do more when Washington does less. Let's give them that chance.

I yield the floor.

EDUCATION

Mrs. FEINSTEIN. Mr. President, I wish to talk about our education system—why it is not working and what we can do to fix it.

Ensuring every child in this country gets a high-quality education is critical to our country's future. Education remains the primary tool to obtaining a good-paying job and building a middle-class life. But too many children are not getting the education they need to succeed in the 21st century workforce.

Nearly 20 percent of students don't graduate from high school. For Hispanic and African-American students, the dropout rate is nearly 25 and 30 percent, respectively.

Hundreds of thousands of high-skilled jobs remain unfilled, and too many Americans find themselves stuck in low-wage jobs that can't support their families. Simply put, our education system is failing our children.

There are a number of reasons for this. Our education system is one-size-fits-all. Teachers are forced to teach to the test and our schools are not equipped with support services to address the many issues that prevent children from learning.

In my view, the main reason we are falling short is that our education system is one-size-fits-all, which doesn't work in education. Students learn differently. Some flourish in large settings and others in small settings with more teacher attention.

Students have varied needs based on where they live. Do they live in a rural area, suburb or city? What is their economic status? Is their family living in poverty? How is their home life? Are they raised in a single parent household? What are their individual interests? Do they like art and music? Or are they more interested in science and technology?

A child who comes from an affluent home in the suburbs learns differently from a child living in poverty in a city. Both children can learn—if the right approach for each child is taken. We need to give States and local school districts more flexibility to do what is right for their students.

Teaching to the test is another problem that plagues our education system. When the emphasis is placed on memorization rather than comprehension, or answering essay questions with a formula rather than reasoning and critical thinking, students are not actively engaged in learning.

Students fail to gain the comprehension and critical thinking skills needed in college and to be successful in the workplace. That is a big reason why up to 60 percent of students who enroll in college need to take remedial English and math classes. Schools need to be places where children learn, not where children memorize.

A child's life outside of school has a tremendous effect on his or her ability to succeed in school. Does a child get enough to eat at home? Are a child's

parents working multiple jobs to pay the bills? Is there violence in the home? Is a child homeless?

Our schools are not equipped with the support services they need, such as mental health professionals and basic health care services that help to address the issues that prevent children from learning.

The good news is that we have solutions to these problems. They are in place, and they need to be implemented on a larger scale.

During the 2013–2014 school year, California implemented its local control funding formula, which targets State funding for poor students, students of color, students with disabilities, foster youth, and English learners.

Under this new formula, local districts can use that funding to teach these students in the way that best works for them. It has made a difference. For example, San Diego Unified School District plans to reduce class sizes from a 25-to-1 to a 22-to-1 student teacher ratio in 29 of the most disadvantaged schools.

The district also plans to look at resource equity and provide expanded access to counseling services and additional services for English learners and students with disabilities.

We also need to expand charter schools and provide continued support to existing, high-quality charter schools. Charter schools tailor instruction to each student and are not bound by traditional school district requirements.

Every child deserves a quality education, and many children who struggle in underperforming schools go on to flourish in charter schools. Here are just a couple of examples from California:

Nolan from East Los Angeles was reading below grade level when he enrolled in a charter school. Within 6 months, he had advanced two grade levels.

Trina, a seventh grader in the Bay area, stated:

I think KIPP teachers are extremely important because they teach us everything we need to know to reach our goal of climbing the mountain to college. I can remember back to my very first day as a KIPPster. We learned that we would need to "work hard" and "be nice." Working hard meant that in our English classes we would be reading and writing every day. When I came to KIPP, I found out that I was at a second grade reading level in the fifth grade! I was shocked, so I worked hard and got to the sixth grade reading level by the end of the year.

Parents desperately want opportunities for their children, and unfortunately the demand for charter schools remains much higher than the supply. Currently in California, approximately 150,000 students are on waiting lists. We need to continue to invest in the expansion and development of charter schools so more children receive the education they deserve now.

Providing support services to at-risk students has also proven to be successful. If students are less worried about

meeting their basic needs and everything that goes on in their lives outside of school, they can learn.

The Monarch School for homeless students in San Diego is a great example of this. It provides food, clothing, counseling, health care, and transportation to its students. And more than 90 percent of graduates go to college or pursue vocational training. We need to fund these kinds of support services in schools where children need them the most. We know that they work.

Education remains the great equalizer in this country, but we have failed in giving all of our children access to the quality education they deserve. By directing extra resources where they are needed most and giving schools the ability to do what is right for their students, we can turn things around—for our children and our country.

Mr. GRASSLEY. I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that at 10:45 a.m. tomorrow, Thursday, July 16, the Senate vote on the following amendments in the order listed: Cruz amendment No. 2180; Sanders amendment No. 2177; Coons amendment No. 2243; Burr amendment No. 2247, as modified; Brown amendment No. 2100; Casey amendment No. 2242; Hatch amendment No. 2082; Warren amendment No. 2106; Schatz amendment No. 2130; Murphy amendment No. 2186; Nelson amendment No. 2215, as modified; Manchin amendment No. 2222; Boozman amendment No. 2231; Baldwin amendment No. 2188; Capito amendment No. 2156; Thune amendment No. 2232; King amendment No. 2256; Schatz amendment No. 2240; and Warren amendment No. 2249.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

MORNING BUSINESS

REMEMBERING JIM GASTON

• Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. President, today I recognize the life and legacy of Arkansas outdoorsman, tourism advocate, and business owner Jim Gaston.

Jim spent his life as a champion of the Arkansas outdoors—sharing his passion of Mother Nature's landscape, wildlife and recreation, and helped paved the path for the Arkansas tourism industry.

Jim inherited the family business, Gaston's White River Resort, in his early 20s when his dad passed away. He saved the property from foreclosure and turned the six cottages and six boats into the premier destination for

anglers and tourists that it is known as today. Under Jim's leadership, the resort grew into a 400-acre property with 79 cottages along 2 miles of river frontage in addition to a restaurant, conference center and other amenities.

As a regular fixture on the White River for more than seven decades, he saw a lot of improvements, often because of his own contributions. His advocacy of minimum flow helped provide a steady stream of water in the river and create the habitat trout need to survive—boosting Arkansas's trout fishing and tourism industry.

Jim was a strong voice for Arkansas tourism locally, regionally, and statewide. He was a lifetime member of the Arkansas Department of Parks and Tourism Commission. He served in numerous leadership positions to promote tourism throughout the State including president of the Arkansas Tourism Development Foundation and Arkansas Hospitality Association. In 2010, Jim Gaston was named the Arkansas Business Executive of the Year and will be awarded the Legacy Award at this year's Arkansas Game & Fish Foundation Outdoor Hall of Fame Awards.

Jim truly transformed Arkansas. His contribution is commemorated in the James A. Gaston Visitor Center, a multi-million dollar facility that teaches about the rivers he loved his entire life.

My thoughts and prayers go out to Jim's wife Jill and the entire Gaston family. I humbly offer my appreciation and gratitude for his contributions to the State of Arkansas, his friendship, and many great memories that I will cherish forever.●

RECOGNIZING ARKANSAS FARM BUREAU FARM FAMILIES

• Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I would like to recognize six Arkansas families who recently were named finalists for the Arkansas Farm Bureau Farm Family of the Year. Their hard work, dedication, and passion have been instrumental not only in the success of their individual farms but our State's agriculture industry as a whole, the largest industry in Arkansas.

The Arkansas Farm Family of the Year program is the longest running program of its kind in the country. Each year a panel of judges selects families who demonstrate outstanding efforts in production, conservation of energy and resources, and leadership in agricultural and family affairs. This year's finalists are John and Mikki Hamilton of Searcy, Allen and Melissa Glidewell of St. Joe, the Wildy Family Farms in Manila, Brent and Ronda Butler of Siloam Springs, the Fueller family of Poplar Grove, Phil and Lesia Hamaker of Junction City, Billy and Charlotte Wilchman of Cleveland, and Roy and Carolyn Ham of Arkadelphia.

These eight families farm a wide variety of crops, including cotton, corn, soybeans, tomatoes, strawberries, peanuts, rice, poultry, and cattle. Growing

up on our family farm in Dardanelle, I learned it takes the whole family to make a farm successful. I want to thank not only these couples but also their children for the sacrifices they have made and the importance they place on the agriculture industry in the community and State. Congratulations on this well-deserved recognition.●

REMEMBERING DARYLE HOLLOWAY

• Mr. VITTER. Mr. President, I wish to honor the memory of Officer Daryle Holloway, a 22-year veteran of the New Orleans Police Department who was killed in the line of duty Saturday, June 20, 2015.

In 1992, Officer Holloway joined the New Orleans Police Department after graduating from St. Augustine High School. Throughout his career, he asked to remain a patrol officer in order to better interact with the residents of district 5 of New Orleans. Known for his sunny disposition, sincerity, and good nature, Officer Holloway truly cared about the neighborhoods he protected.

Following the levee breaches after Hurricane Katrina, Officer Holloway remained in the city providing security at Charity Hospital. Later he performed water rescue missions, bravely rescuing numerous people trapped in their homes or on their rooftops.

Besides his duty as a police officer, Officer Holloway remained an ardent supporter of his high school alma mater, St. Augustine, where he volunteered as a mentor to troubled students and continued to be a valuable part of the all-boys Catholic high school.

For the past 22 years, Officer Holloway served the citizens of New Orleans, LA, with his professionalism, skill, enthusiasm, and leadership. He selflessly served his community as a guardian, mentor, and father of three children, Kalia, Cydni, and Dillion. It is with a heavy heart that I honor the esteemed life and career of Officer Daryle Holloway. I thank him for his years of service to our State and country and pray for his family and friends.●

MESSAGES FROM THE PRESIDENT

Messages from the President of the United States were communicated to the Senate by Mr. Pate, one of his secretaries.

EXECUTIVE MESSAGES REFERRED

As in executive session the Presiding Officer laid before the Senate messages from the President of the United States submitting nominations which were referred to the Committee on Armed Services.

(The messages received today are printed at the end of the Senate proceedings.)