

NACSA Supports House Efforts to Strengthen Charter Schools

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The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) supports HR 5, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), which the full House will consider tomorrow. NACSA reasserted its desire to work with key members of Congress as they work to complete the long-anticipated reauthorization.

According to Vice President for Policy and Advocacy Alex Medler, “We applaud the bipartisan efforts of Chairman John Kline, Ranking Democratic Member George Miller and the members of the House Education Committee to improve the quality of charter school authorizing.” Medler added, “The committee’s leadership and members have proven their commitment to making meaningful improvements to federal charter school policy.”

Medler noted that both the House bill, as well as the Senate version crafted by Senator Tom Harkin, contains key provisions that recognize the importance of charter school authorizing on charter school quality. He added, “We’ll continue to work with members of Congress from both chambers to make sure reauthorization occurs and places a strong emphasis on school quality.”

The proposed House legislation includes requirements that states receiving federal grants under the charter school program work with charter schools and their authorizers to ensure that they are meeting their obligations to serve students with disabilities and English Language Learners. Grant recipients would also need to ensure that their charter school policies include a set of quality controls to protect the interest of schools, students and taxpayers including:

- written performance agreements between each charter school and its authorizer;
- annual independent financial audits of each school; and
- defined academic and operational performance standards based on a state’s accountability system.

The National Association of Charter School Authorizers (NACSA) is committed to advancing excellence and accountability in the charter school sector and to increasing the number of high-quality charter schools across the nation. To accomplish this mission, NACSA works to improve the policies and practices of authorizers—the organizations designated to approve, monitor, renew, and, if necessary, close charter schools. NACSA provides training, consulting, and policy guidance to authorizers. It also advocates for laws and policies that raise the bar for excellence among authorizers and the schools they charter. In late 2012, NACSA launched its One Million Lives campaign to give one million more children the opportunity to attend a great school. Visit www.qualitycharters.org