



The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Education & the Workforce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable George Miller  
Ranking Member  
Education & the Workforce Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

June 13, 2013

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Miller:

As the nation's largest, volunteer child advocacy association, the National PTA has significantly impacted improvements to the education and well-being of America's children for 115 years. Currently with millions of families and 24,000 local units in every U.S. state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands and Europe, National PTA continues to be a powerful voice for all children by advocating for federal policies to improve educational equity and opportunity for all children and their families.

**On behalf of National PTA, we would like to thank Congressman Miller for including the Keeping All Students Safe Act in his proposed Student Success Act substitute bill.** In 2009, a Government Accountability Office study found that children were injured, traumatized, and even killed through restraint and seclusion in schools. It is time for a national policy prohibiting the use of restraint and seclusion in school except in emergencies threatening physical safety. Congressman Miller's substitute would embed these protections in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). We are concerned Chairman Kline's Student Success Act (H.R. 5) does not include the Keeping All Students Safe Act and does not protect children from these dangerous procedures in school.

In March 2012, the Civil Rights Data Collection showed that nearly 40,000 students were physically restrained during the 2009-10 school year. The data also showed that restraint and seclusion are disproportionately used upon students with disabilities and minority students.

Chairman Miller's bill would protect all children nationwide from restraint and seclusion except in emergencies threatening physical danger. It would require schools to take steps to notify parents promptly, and would ban dangerous mechanical and chemical restraints, and restraints that impede breathing. Fewer than half of all states lack these protections for all children. Congressman Miller's proposed bill will promote a shift toward preventing problematic behavior through the use of de-escalation techniques, conflict management and evidence-based positive behavioral interventions and supports. This shift will help school personnel understand the needs of their students and safely address the source of challenging behaviors – a better result for everyone in the classroom. Positive environments protect children and help them learn. The bill will ensure that staff are properly trained in evidence-based methods to minimize the use of restraint and seclusion and to better protect students and staff. The bill will ban the use



of aversives that compromise health or safety. It will require collection of data to better inform decision-making and promote sunshine.

We urge the Education and Workforce Committee to adopt language from the Keeping All Students Safe Act that is included in Congressman Miller's substitute ESEA language to ensure that children nationwide are in a safe and in a positive environment in school. It is time to end the current patchwork of protections.

Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Mollie Van Lieu at [mvanlieu@pta.org](mailto:mvanlieu@pta.org)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Betsy Landers". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped "B" and "L".

Betsy Landers  
National PTA President