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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

TODD ROKITA
4TH DISTRICT, INDIANA

COMMITTEE ON THE BUDGET
VICE-CHAIRMAN

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

ROKITA.HOUSE.GOV

February 6, 2015

The President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

Welcome to the great state of Indiana. I hope during your short visit you will experience true Hoosier hospitality and the values we stand for - hard work, common sense, and individual liberty.

As you know, last November we worked together to reauthorize the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program. During the bill signing event for this bipartisan legislation, you commented that in addition to CCDBG, more could be done if we work together. To that end, you should consider the following, where our combined attention could yield positive results for our nation's children.

Hoosiers understand the value of a quality education. This is why, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education, I have been working hard to reauthorize the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). As you know, this law has not been updated since 2002, which has given way to a patchwork education system reliant on waivers from the U.S. Department of Education. I think we can agree temporary waivers are no way to manage our education system.

To address this concern, I introduced, along with Education and the Workforce Committee Chairman John Kline, the Student Success Act on Tuesday. This legislation would reauthorize ESEA for the first time in thirteen years. I believe students, parents, and teachers deserve a long-term reauthorization instead of policies that tie the hands of our states and school districts to one-size-fits-all, failed requirements. For example, by removing any federal incentives for the adoption of the Common Core State Standards, we can restore state flexibility and decision-making in education, including academic standards.

I also believe students shouldn't be resigned to failing or underperforming schools. I've heard from parents across Indiana who want the best possible education for their children. Thanks to the leadership of our state and school districts, Hoosier families have choice in education. To build on the success of school choice here in Indiana, the Student Success Act strengthens and expands opportunities for charter schools - something that has strong bipartisan support.

To that end, I ask that you join me and my colleagues in passing legislation to reauthorize this outdated law. The American people expect leadership out of Washington. We have an opportunity to demonstrate such leadership.

I look forward to working with you, and again, enjoy your time in the Hoosier state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Todd Rokita".

Todd Rokita
Member of Congress