



CHOICE ACT

Creating Hope and Opportunities for Individuals and Communities through Education Act

The CHOICE Act seeks to expand opportunities and foster success by providing students and parents greater choice in education. Representative Rokita strongly believes that no child should be subject to failing or underperforming schools. This legislation seeks to empower families to choose the education best suited to their children through three specific reforms.

Ensures Children with Disabilities Get Educational Options Best Suited for Them

Approximately 6 million students with disabilities, ages 6-21, receive educational services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)

- ✓ Encourages states to establish school choice programs for students with disabilities by providing startup funds to support the design and initial implementation of a disability choice program.
- ✓ Enables states that already run disability school choice programs to expand educational options for children with special needs.
- ✓ Permits IDEA portability, allowing dollars to follow the child to the family's school of choice.

Provides More Choices to Military Families As They Serve Their Country

Expands options for the approximately 200,000 children that live on domestic military installations

- ✓ Creates a pilot program under the Department of Defense on at least 5 bases without DoD Education Activity schools to provide scholarships to students in military families on base of up to \$8,000 for elementary and \$12,000 for high school.
- ✓ Requires an annual report as well as a final report on participation numbers, applicants, participating schools, and parental satisfaction, to ensure accountability and transparency.
- ✓ Offset by decreases to the Department of Education's Salaries and Expenses account.

Expands Educational Options for Low-Income Families in Washington, DC

Since 2004, the DC Opportunity Scholarship Program (DC OSP) has served more than 5,000 low-income children in Washington, DC and has become a model for effective public scholarship programs. With more than 20,000 students on OSP waiting lists, more can be done.

- ✓ Expands educational options for low-income students by requiring excess carry-over funds that are not needed for the continuation of current participants' scholarships be used to increase promotion and outreach and support more scholarships.
- ✓ Ensures children currently enrolled in private schools who meet all of the DC OSP eligibility requirements are not unnecessarily excluded from participation. The Department of Education arbitrarily deemed 82 children ineligible in 2013 alone.

To cosponsor, or with questions, please contact Mark Cruz at mark.cruz@mail.house.gov or 5-5037.