

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

September 18, 2017

The Honorable Elizabeth DeVos
Secretary
United States Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos,

The Indiana congressional delegation asks the U.S. Department of Education to use its administrative discretion to impose a temporary moratorium on the use and reporting of the new federal high school graduation rate definition guided by language in the *Every Student Succeeds Act*. A temporary delay would provide Indiana and similarly situated state governments the necessary time to properly adjust diploma policies to align with the educational accountability the law seeks. The State of Indiana cannot act to make the proper policy adjustments without authorization by the Indiana General Assembly, which meets next in 2018. Implementing a change in State diploma policy will also require the State to inform local school districts on the new policy, and assist in statewide implementation.

Implementing the definition immediately could cause unintended and unnecessary impacts on educational outcomes and economic development of Indiana based on a misconception that high school student completion in the state suddenly and inexplicably plummeted. Based on 2016 data, the immediate change in definition would reduce Indiana's reported graduation rate from approximately 89 percent to 76 percent.

Indiana students currently choose to move to a General Diploma from a Core 40 Diploma at the end of the sophomore year. Allowing for current high school juniors and seniors to complete their General Diploma track, while providing the State the necessary time to phase out the General Diploma option would prevent such an unnecessary and potentially harmful statistical event.

The State of Indiana does not oppose the new definition, only its immediate implementation. We ask for the Administration to work in cooperation with Indiana and other affected states to provide the educational accountability sought by the *Every Student Succeeds Act* without unduly penalizing states working in good faith to improve the public education for all our current and future students. We look forward to working with the Department of Education on a solution that achieves these shared objectives.

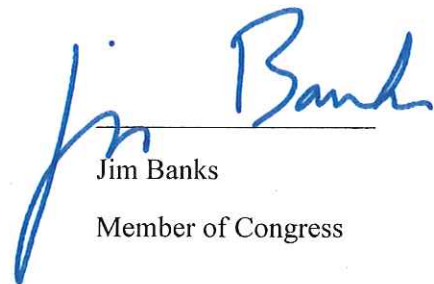
Sincerely,



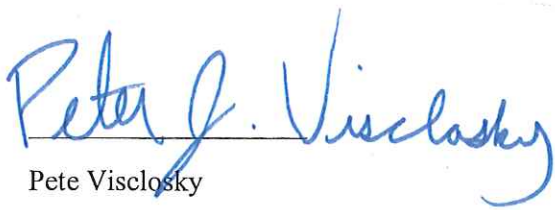
Joe Donnelly
US Senator



Todd Young
US Senator



Jim Banks
Member of Congress




Pete Visclosky

Member of Congress



Jackie Walorski

Member of Congress



Todd Rokita

Member of Congress



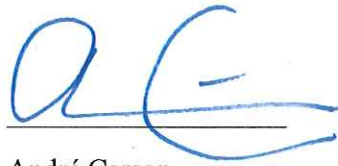
Susan Brooks

Member of Congress



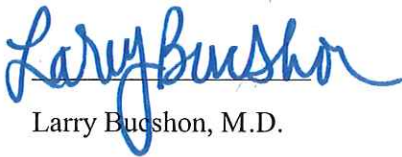
Luke Messer

Member of Congress



André Carson

Member of Congress



Larry Bucshon, M.D.

Member of Congress



Trey Hollingsworth

Member of Congress