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Tell Your Senators to Support the Local Leadership in Education Act, S. 144.

As one of our more than 6.7 million FreedomWorks members nationwide, I urge you to contact your senators today and ask them to support Senator Mike Crapo's Local Leadership in Education Act "to prohibit the Federal Government from mandating, incentivizing, or making financial support conditional upon a State, local educational agency, or school's adoption of specific instructional content, academic standards, or curriculum, or on the administration of assessments or tests, and for other purposes," and to co-sponsor the bill if they have not already done so.

The federal government, under regulations from the U.S. Department of Education, has exceeded its constitutional authority by coercing states into adopting common academic standards and submitting to centrally planned testing requirements in order to receive funding from President Obama's Race to the Top program, or else to qualify for waivers exempting them from the failed No Child Left Behind program.

This means that even as states recognize the damage that Common Core education standards are doing, and begin to repeal them, governors are forced to choose between adopting similar standards and leaving billions of dollars of funding for their state's education system on the table.

The Local Leadership in Education Act amends the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA) to prohibit any agent of the federal government from requiring the adoption of any standards or academic content as a condition of receiving federal funds, grants or waivers. Additionally, the Act forbids any testing implementation or development requirements from the federal government, such as the Common Core aligned PARCC or Smarter Balanced Assessments, as a condition for funding of any kind.

The current language of ESEA states that the federal government may not "mandate, direct, or control a State, local educational agency, or school's curriculum, program of instruction, or allocation of State or local resources." Clearly, this language has been insufficient to stop the Department of Education from indirectly controlling state and local education policy. The Local Leadership in Education Act extends these prohibitions to academic standards, closes the loopholes in ESEA, and makes its effect on Race to the Top funding and No Child Left Behind waivers explicit.

Senator Crapo's bill would prevent the federal government from ever again, directly or indirectly, dictating state education policy through the use of mandates, funding, grants, or waivers, and helps restore education to its rightful place as a state and local issue.

Education funding shouldn't be used as a hostage to force states to implement Common Core or any other arbitrary federal standard. I hope you'll contact your senators and urge them to support and co-sponsor the Local Leadership in Education Act, S. 144.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt", with a stylized flourish extending to the right.

Matt Kibbe
President & CEO,
FreedomWorks