

Castle Helps Kick Off Bicameral, Bipartisan Reauthorization of No Child Left Behind -- March 13, 2007

Washington, D.C. -- Delaware Congressman Mike Castle, a co-author of No Child Left Behind, joined other key education leaders today to kick off the reauthorization of the K-12 education law with a bicameral, bipartisan hearing entitled "Improving NCLB to Close the Achievement Gap." The goal of the hearing was to discuss the progress that schools have made and the challenges that they face since the No Child Left Behind Act was enacted, while focusing on recommendations for improving the law.

During the hearing, Congressman Castle questioned the witnesses on their opinion of growth model pilot programs underway around the country, which measure student achievement and accountability over time, while still ensuring that this growth is working toward the goal of 100 percent student proficiency by 2014. Currently, Delaware is one of only five states who have been approved by the U.S. Department of Education to implement a growth model pilot program.

"Today's hearing is extremely important for education in this country because it brings to light the importance of No Child Left Behind while illustrating some of the possible changes which may be needed to evolve the law. In the upcoming reauthorization, I believe we need to focus on several key aspects of the law, including building on the success and intent of NCLB, validity of graduation rate calculations, the appropriate use of growth models, school leadership and interventions that work to close the achievement gap," Castle said.

Castle would like to address the following key issues of No Child Left Behind during reauthorization:

- Accountability: There must be a discussion on the variation of standards across the states, as well as what is appropriate to include in our high schools. In addition, Congress must look at the treatment of special education students and ESL students.
- Growth Models: There must be a thorough evaluation of growth models, and how they can be used so as to not limit our current goal of proficiency by 2014.
- Getting students on grade level by 2014: There will be a discussion of supplemental services and other interventions that might be helpful as well as how teachers and administrators can share best practices.
- Funding: Legislators will need to look at what is the most efficient and effective use of time and money at the state and local level.

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