

## Support Legislation to Protect Children and Staff in Schools

### *Co-sponsor H.R. 4247*

### *“Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act”*

*Endorsed by a number of organizations, including the National School Boards Association, National Education Association, American Federation of Teachers, National Association of State Directors of Special Education, National Disability Rights Network, The Arc of the United States, Council on Exceptional Children, and others.*

Dear Colleague:

Last week, families, advocates and education groups stood together with us to introduce landmark bipartisan legislation which will, for the first time, protect all children in schools from harmful uses of restraint and seclusion.

A Government Accountability Office (GAO) report released last spring exposed hundreds of cases of schoolchildren being abused as a result of inappropriate uses of restraint and seclusion, often involving untrained staff. These practices have resulted in numerous injuries and trauma to students and their families. The Committee also heard from families whose children died tragically due to these wrongful practices. While the Children’s Health Act of 2000 regulates how and when restraint and seclusion can be used in hospitals and other medical and community-based facilities, schools are not covered. State regulation and oversight varies greatly; many states provide no guidance or assistance regarding these behavioral interventions.

The *Preventing Harmful Restraint and Seclusion in Schools Act* (H.R. 4247) is a balanced approach to make classrooms safer for the entire school community, students and teachers. It would apply to public schools, private schools and preschools receiving federal education support. Specifically, the legislation would:

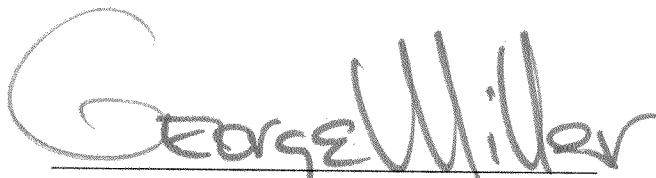
- Establish important minimum federal safety standards in schools, similar to the protections already in place in hospitals and other non-medical community based facilities;
- Limit physical restraint and locked seclusion, allowing these interventions only when there is imminent danger of injury, and only when imposed by trained staff;
- Prohibit mechanical restraints, such as strapping kids to chairs, as well as restraints that restrict breathing;
- Require schools to notify parents after incidents when restraint or seclusion was used;
- Call on states, within two years of enactment, to establish their own policies, procedures, monitoring and enforcement systems to meet these minimum standards;
- Encourage states to provide support and training to better protect students and prevent the need for emergency behavioral interventions; and
- Increase transparency, oversight and enforcement tools to prevent future abuse.

**We invite you to co-sponsor this important piece of legislation.**

For more information about this important bill, please visit the [Committee on Education and Labor website](#). Or, to sign-on as a co-sponsor or for more information, please contact Fred Jones at the Committee on Education and Labor at [Fred.Jones@mail.house.gov](mailto:Fred.Jones@mail.house.gov) or Kimberly Betz in Representative McMorris Rodgers office at [Kimberly.betz@mail.house.gov](mailto:Kimberly.betz@mail.house.gov).

Thank you for your support.

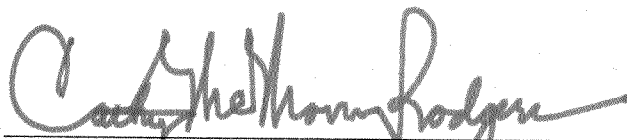
Sincerely,



**GEORGE MILLER**

Chairman

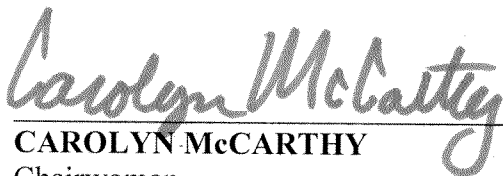
Committee on Education and Labor



**CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS**

Member

Committee on Education and Labor



**CAROLYN McCARTHY**

Chairwoman

Healthy Families and Communities

Committee on Education and Labor



**TODD R. PLATTS**

Ranking Member

Healthy Families and Communities

Committee on Education and Labor