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Congress of the United States
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SELECT SUBCOMMITTEE ON
THE CORONAVIRUS CRISIS

October 6, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202-3100

Dear Secretary DeVos:

Americans remain strong and adaptable as the coronavirus pandemic has disrupted everyday life. As we go about new routines and make the most of the situation, it is important that we continue to adapt our education system to serve the needs of students and teachers in the face of unusual circumstances.

Requiring high stakes testing during a pandemic is both unnecessary and counterproductive. In hard times like these, we must go the extra mile to support our students and teachers who are struggling, rather than burdening them. Teachers, students, and parents quickly adapted in the wake of this pandemic, and our education system must do the same.

Therefore, I join the ranks of families and schools across the country in urging the Department of Education to acknowledge these challenges and immediately grant any state requests for a one-year waiver under Section 8401 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (20 U.S.C. § 7861).

Students can learn safely and effectively in-person with the right precautions. It is irresponsible for our education system to overlook the challenges of the pandemic and divert resources that could instead be used to close the learning loss gap. I urge the Department of Education to immediately address this onerous classroom distraction and issue a waiver for high stakes testing for the 2020-2021 school year.

Thank you for dedication to our school systems and ensuring that teachers, students, and parents have the resources they need to thrive. I appreciate your time in evaluating this proposal. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call my office at (202) 225-2811 or email my Legislative Director, Jay Kronzer, at Jay.Kronzer@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

Mark E. Green, MD
Member of Congress