



the  
CENTER FOR EDUCATION REFORM

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January 6, 2017

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
US Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

I write to express the strong support of the Center for Education Reform for Betsy DeVos, whose nomination to be Secretary of Education will be taken up by your committee on January 11.

The Education Department needs a fresh thinker, a leader who is not beholden to any membership organization. At a time when barely 40% of our students can read or write or do math at even basic levels, our nation needs someone who can see beyond the day to day of a multitude of federal programs and ensure that all efforts are driving in the direction of the very purpose of that work – the education of our youth.

Betsy DeVos has devoted much of her adult life to the cause of finding and supporting efforts to eradicate illiteracy, to equalize education options for children, and to ensure that those who do not have what she has been fortunate to have in life have just as many opportunities.

I have had the pleasure of working with Betsy in many places where we've shared the ramparts in a common battle for education reform, choice and innovation. Most importantly, parents everywhere, especially those who despair at finding their children locked into failing schools and robbed of hope for their futures, will find that they have a true friend in Betsy DeVos.

It is time to break through political barriers to opportunity for all learners, at all levels. We at the Center know that education opportunity, combined with the ability to expose our schools to unprecedented innovations in teaching and learning, are together, the key to the American Dream.

I urge you and all of your colleagues to look past the political posturing and understand that a fresh, worldly, bold thinker is precisely what we need today as the helm of the U.S. Department of Education.

Best Regards,



Jeanne Allen  
Founder and CEO