

End Corporal Punishment in Schools – Cosponsor the Protecting Our Students in Schools Act ([HR 8460](#))

Endorsed by: The Education Trust; National Disability Rights Network; SPLC Action Fund; National Education Association; American Federation of Teachers; Autistic Self Advocacy Network; GLSEN; National Association Of Secondary School Principals; National Association of School Psychologists; The Intercultural Development Research Association; Campaign for Youth Justice; Brian Injury Association of America; The National PTA; American School Counselor Association; Legal Aid Justice Center; Prevent Child Abuse America; Institute on Violence, Abuse and Trauma; U.S. Alliance to End the Hitting of Children; American Professional Society on the Abuse of Children; National Initiative to End Corporal Punishment; National No Hit Zone Committee; The Up Institute; Nollie Jenkins Family Center, Inc.; the International Association of Forensic Nurses; Futures Without Violence; The Council for Exceptional Children; the Southern Education Foundation; the National Women’s Law Center; The Arc of the United States; and the National Association of Pediatric Nurse Practitioners.

Cosponsors: Adams; Gallego; Grijalva; B. Thompson; Trone;

Dear Colleague,

Every day, in nearly twenty states across the country, students are at risk of being subjected to corporal punishment, or the act of inflicting physical pain as a form of discipline. This disgraceful practice can result in serious physical injury, including abrasions, broken bones, bruising, hematomas, and other medical complications, and it can also cause damaging long-term outcomes. Research has linked the practice in schools to negative outcomes, including poor academic performance, physical and emotional harm, and damage to students’ self-esteem and to their trust with educators.

In addition to being both deeply harmful and ineffective, corporal punishment is disproportionately applied to students of color and students with disabilities. Research demonstrates that Black male students are approximately twice as likely to be subjected to corporal punishment as white male students, and Black female students are three times as likely as white female students.^[1] Furthermore, students with disabilities are struck at higher rates than students without disabilities; nearly 15 percent of all students corporally punished are students with disabilities.^[2]

Corporal punishment has no place in our nation’s schools and there have been repeated attempts in state legislatures across the country to ban its use. Despite these efforts, many states have failed to end this practice, subjecting their students to continued harm. Federal leadership is desperately needed to end this practice once and for all, and our legislation, the **Protecting Our Students in Schools Act of 2020**, achieves that goal.

The Protecting Our Students in Schools Act of 2020 (H.R. 8460) would prohibit the practice of corporal punishment in any school which receives federal funding, and would establish a series of important and much-needed enforcement protections for students and families.

Specifically, the bill:

- Prohibits the practice of corporal punishment in any school that receives federal financial assistance.

^[1] https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/com_corporal_punishment_final_web_0.pdf

^[2] Ibid

- Establishes numerous enforcement protections, including a private right of action, the involvement of the attorney general and the Office for Civil Rights, and a series of rigorous reporting requirements for states and school districts.
- Invests in states and school districts by establishing a grant program to improve school climate and culture by implementing positive, proactive measures, including positive behavioral interventions and supports, trauma-informed care, restorative justice interventions, implicit bias training, and culturally responsive teaching, to reduce exclusionary and aversive discipline practices.

Using physical violence against students is disgraceful and unacceptable, and we hope you will join us in eliminating corporal punishment from our schools. If you would like more information about the **Protecting Our Students in Schools Act of 2020**, or if you would like to be added as a cosponsor, please contact Blair Wriston with Rep. McEachin's office at Blair.Wriston@mail.house.gov or 5-6365 or Jessica Bowen with Rep. Bonamici's office at Jessica.Bowen@mail.house.gov.

Sincerely,

A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress
Chair of the Civil Rights and Human Services Subcommittee