

## December 2017 Peace Alliance Action Sheet

### Promote the Teacher Health and Wellness Act (HR. 2544)

Author and Lead Sponsor: Rep Tim Ryan

Social/Emotional wellness and learning can start with our nation's teachers – this common-sense legislation would start by studying what works to keep teachers healthy and well.

Below is an excerpt from the actual bill language – telling what it would do. Here are three simple steps to advance social and emotional intelligence and well-being among our children:

1. Call the **Congressional switchboard (202) 224-3121** and ask for your House Member's office by name (if you are unsure, you can google "who is my representative" and enter your zipcode).
2. Tell whomever answers that **you would like your Representative to co-sponsor HR 2544, the Teacher Health and Wellness Act**. (If it is after hours or weekend, you can leave an effective message!)
3. For extra credit, ask to speak with whoever in your Rep's office is focused on educational issues, and **begin to cultivate a relationship with that person**, starting with discussing this subject!

#### **HR 2544 Excerpt:**

SEC. 3. Study on reducing teacher stress and increasing teacher retention and well-being.

(a) In general.—The Director of the National Institutes of Health shall carry out a five-year study on reducing teacher stress and increasing teacher retention and well-being by **implementing and analyzing the results of any of the following programs:**

- (1) Workplace wellness programs that are designed to improve teacher health, attendance, and engagement.
- (2) Social emotional learning programs that help teachers improve student engagement in the classroom.
- (3) Teacher stress management programs that improve teacher performance.
- (4) Mentoring and induction programs during the school year and teacher pre-service that improve teacher well-being.
- (5) Organizational interventions such as principal training programs that reduce stress through supervisor/peer support and increasing opportunities for teachers to participate in professional

learning communities, teacher leadership positions, and decision making regarding school interventions and management.

(6) Teacher residency programs that provide mental health and psychological support.

(7) Complementary health approaches, such as mindfulness meditation, that improve teacher performance.

(8) School reorganization that creates the conditions to facilitate the transmission and sharing of knowledge among teachers.

(9) Other innovative evidence-based approaches that reduce stress and increase well-being in the teaching profession, which may include increased compensation.

(b) Report.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one year after the end of the study carried out under subsection (a), the Director shall submit to the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate a report including—

(A) the results of the study carried out under subsection (a); and

(B) recommendations for—

(i) decreasing teacher stress and increasing teacher retention and well-being; and

(ii) lowering stress-related health care costs for teachers.

(2) AVAILABILITY.—The Director shall make publicly available the report submitted under paragraph (1).