

**Peter McWalters, Rhode Island
Commissioner of Elementary and Secondary Education**

**Summary of testimony before the House Education and Labor Committee
March 21, 2007**

Commissioner Peter McWalters asked the Committee to reconsider three issues:

- how states determine whether schools have met their targets,
- how we publicly identify schools that have missed their targets, and
- how states can best deliver assistance and implement consequences to help schools meet their goals.

He argued that NCLB:

- Should allow states to employ indicators in addition to student performance to determine whether schools and districts are making Adequate Yearly Progress. These indicators could include measures of capacity such as evaluations of school climate, instructional practices, instructional leadership, teacher development, program implementation, and parental engagement. These indicators should be supplementary to assessment results, but they should be allowed as part of the overall determination of school and district progress.
- Should establish a graduated system of classifications for schools and districts that have been identified for improvement. The identification of schools and districts should include information as to how many targets were missed as well

as for how many years. The identification of schools and districts should also indicate the capacity of the school or district to meet all targets, as determined by indicators other than test results.

- Should not prescribe state responses to schools and districts that have missed annual targets. It should give states the authority to use their best professional judgment to build school improvement.