



The Hon. Patty Murray  
Chair  
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Hon. Susan Collins  
Vice Chair  
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20510

July 26, 2023

Dear Chair Murray and Vice Chair Collins:

I write to you today out of the deepest urgency. The House Appropriations Committee is poised to approve the deepest cuts in K-12 education spending in more than a generation, thereby wreaking havoc on our nation's public school system. I implore you to work towards more reasonable funding levels in your committee's version of the FY24 Labor HHS Education Appropriations bill, preserving annual funding levels that at least adhere to the nearly-level funding agreed to in the Fiscal Responsibility Act. In sum, we are relying on the Senate to save us from the House's ill-considered and frankly outrageous proposals.

The House's drastic and wholly unwarranted proposal to remove more than \$28 billion from the Department of Education's budget comes at a particularly fraught time for public education in the United States. The recently released National Assessment for Educational Progress scores show plainly that our nation's students lost a great deal of ground during the COVID-19 emergency and that they are struggling mightily just to get back to achievement levels attained in 2019. Students need a panoply of services to support their post-pandemic academic efforts, including out-of-school academic supports, mental health counseling, and well-prepared educators. Slashing Title I funding for disadvantaged students – which could lead to layoffs of hundreds of thousands of educators – and eliminating entirely Title II-A funding for educators' professional learning – will not lead to better results for our students.

Speaking as a former educator and the current leader of Learning Forward, an organization that is laser-focused on professional learning for teachers and school and district leaders, the House's decision to end direct federal support for professional learning would have devastating consequences for our students and erode the foundation of public education in America. Without enough educators, a public education system will struggle to deliver a world-class education to students. And it is no secret that even before the pandemic, school districts struggled to fill educator vacancies. Educators were already underpaid, under-supported, and underappreciated. The pandemic only exacerbated those issues, causing more educators to leave the profession and even fewer college students to enter it.

Following the pandemic with this House proposal to terminate Title II-A funding will only lead to the forced elimination of research-based professional learning opportunities that are helping educators meet the pandemic-induced challenges none of us ever prepared for or expected to

face. Those opportunities include coaching, mentoring, and Professional Learning Communities for educators to learn with and from each other. Eliminating them will only stir more educators to leave the profession, depress college student interest in entering the educator pipeline, and prevent remaining educators from honing their skills to improve their pedagogy – all of which would harm students. Simply put, the House proposal would be a disaster.

I hope that the Senate will preserve K-12 education spending and prevent the House's rash and dangerous education funding proposals from becoming law. Our nation's students and educators are counting on you.

Yours sincerely,



Frederick Brown  
President & CEO