

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education and
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Subcommittee of Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

As the Subcommittee begins its consideration of the fiscal year (FY) 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we urge the Subcommittee to maintain the Senate's robust investment in supporting a safe, healthy, and well-rounded education for all students. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), signed into law on December 10, 2015, included a \$1.6 billion authorization level for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program (Title IV, Part A). The FY18 Omnibus bill provided \$1.1 billion for the program, a significant investment in meeting the comprehensive needs of our nation's students. We believe it is critical that Congress maintain a strong, ongoing investment in this program, as was intended when it was first authorized.

We acknowledge the challenges and constraints of any fiscal year's budget require you to make difficult decisions regarding many worthy programs. However, we believe Congress conveyed a strong message about the importance of funding a wide array of activities and programs in creating the Student Support & Academic Enrichment Grant program. In providing \$1.1 billion for this grant in FY18, you have provided school districts with the opportunity to begin to fully realize its benefits. As such, it is imperative that you provide continuity by, at a minimum, maintaining the FY18-enacted level.

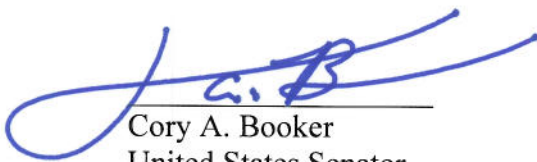
The data are clear that to best support the academic success of our children, they must feel secure, supported and engaged in their school environment. Assisting states in making meaningful updates in technology, increasing opportunities to provide a well-rounded education, providing funds for mental health professionals and implementing locally-tailored programs to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline practices are just a few of the activities supported under this grant program. As a formula-based program focused on the flexible, locally-determined use of funds, the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant is well suited to ensuring that a large number of districts have resources they can direct in a manner that best addresses their particular needs.

We have all heard from parents, educators, and students in our states who understand that students need access to a comprehensive education to compete successfully in the 21st Century

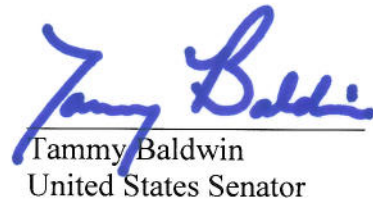
global marketplace. Moreover, the programs covered under the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program will support the principle that a well-rounded curriculum should never be a luxury reserved for some, but a necessity available to all.

We are grateful for the significant resources dedicated to the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grant program in FY18, and we appreciate your ongoing commitment to elementary and secondary education. We ask that you continue to support our children by providing the strongest possible funding for this program, at the FY 2018 enacted level or higher, in the FY 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



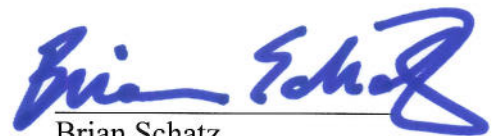
Tina Smith
United States Senator



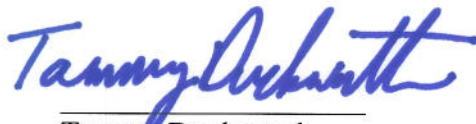
Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



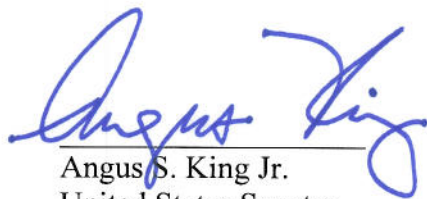
Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



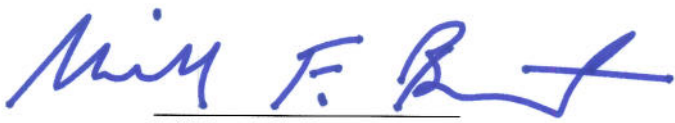
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Angus S. King Jr.
United States Senator



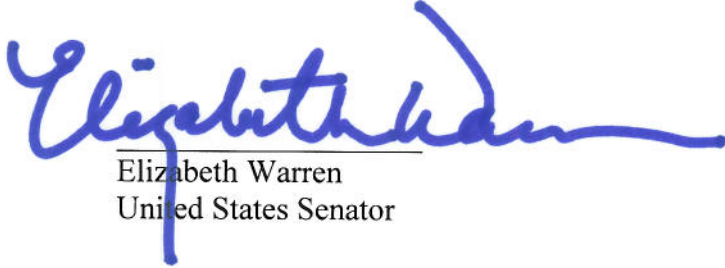
Jack Reed
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



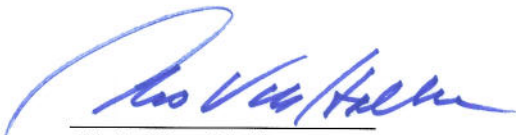
Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



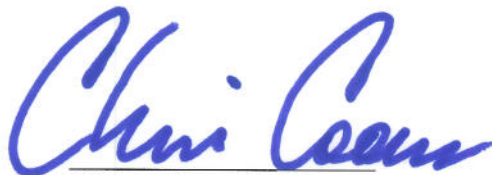
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



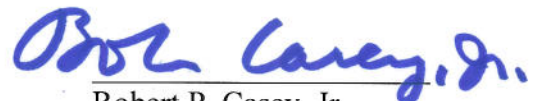
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



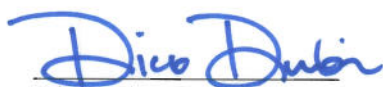
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



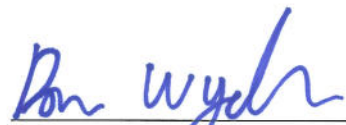
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator




Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



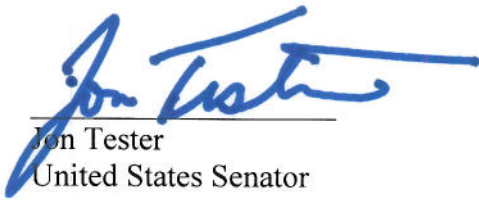
Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



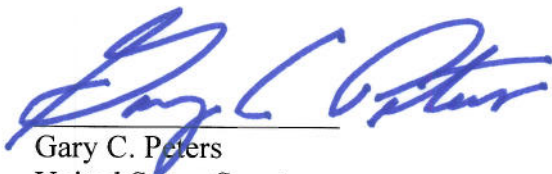
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



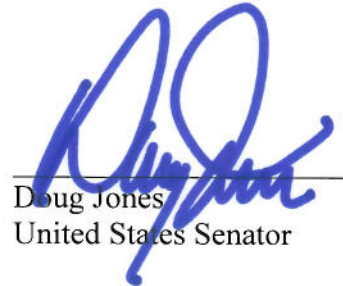
Jon Tester
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



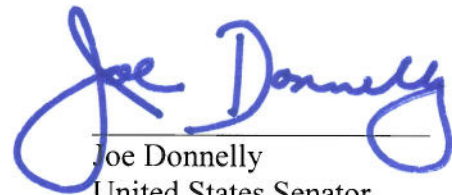
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Doug Jones
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator



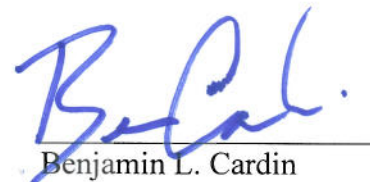
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator