

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
H-309, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you develop the Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 appropriations bill for the U.S. Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education, we respectfully request that you appropriate \$728 million for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES).

IES is an independent branch of the Department of Education and it plays a critical role in examining the effectiveness of education programs. As the nonpartisan evaluator of federal education policies, IES helps make sure that taxpayers' money is being invested in efforts that are supported by rigorous research and demonstrated results.

In addition to overseeing programs that gather and analyze data on student outcomes and evaluate the effects of federal and local education policies, IES advances locally developed research-based solutions to the unique challenges in rural, urban, and suburban communities across the country. Taken together, IES's work gives educators and district- and state-level education leaders the information and tools they need to improve learning and close achievement gaps.

For example, IES administers the National Assessment of Educational Progress—commonly known as the Nation's Report Card—which yields valuable data on student achievement nationwide. IES funds longitudinal data systems and statistics programs that give educators and researchers the information they need to measure the success of education policies and practices. And IES supports Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), the National Center for Education Research (NCER), and the National Center for Special Education Research (NCSER).

Research from RELs has helped school districts target support to English learners, design fairer discipline policies, and implement early interventions that keep students on track to graduate. NCER supports the development of research-backed curricula and best practices that strengthen learning from early childhood to postsecondary education—all of which are evaluated for effectiveness.

Research from NCSER helps inform educators and families of evidence-based interventions and strategies that support the development and academic success of children with disabilities, which includes strategies for improving early childhood special education; advancing reading, writing,

and language development; educating students on the autism spectrum; and helping students transition to post-secondary education and careers. During her confirmation process, Secretary DeVos underscored the value of this investment, writing, “[W]e must fund research and disseminate information about evidence based practices that work best for students with disabilities.”


Although we appreciate the resources proposed for RELs in your committee’s FY 2017 draft report, we were deeply concerned that the report included cuts to critical programs and a roughly 15 percent reduction in funding for IES overall. At the same time, Congress continues to ask more of IES. For example, the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act, which replaced No Child Left Behind and is being implemented in states this year, places new emphasis on evidence-based decision making. The law directs IES to evaluate a number of new programs, and it requires RELs to assist states and school districts in implementing evidence-based practices.

Thank you for your attention to our request that you appropriate \$728 million for IES. Our education system will be stronger in the future if we provide meaningful, sustained support for rigorous education research and evaluation today.

Sincerely,

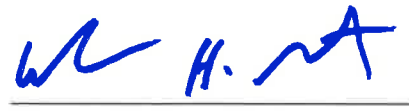

Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress

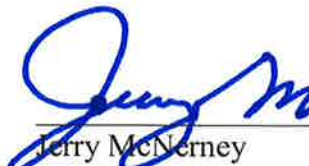

Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Member of Congress


Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress


Bill Pascrell, Jr.
Member of Congress


Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress


Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

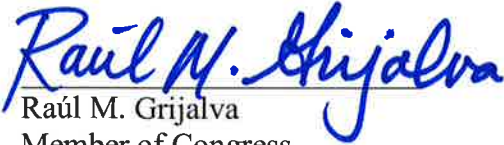

Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



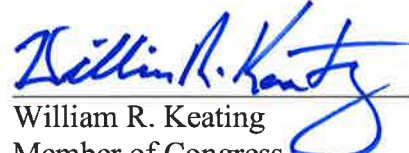
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress



Peter DeFazio
Member of Congress



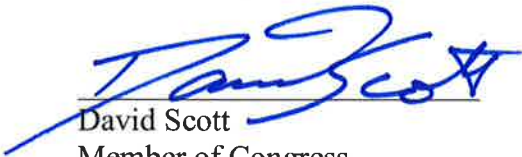
Michael E. Capuano
Member of Congress



John K. Delaney
Member of Congress



Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Earl Blumenauer
Member of Congress



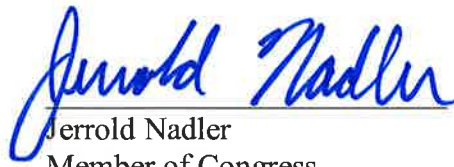
G. K. Butterfield
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress



Wm. Lacy Clay
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



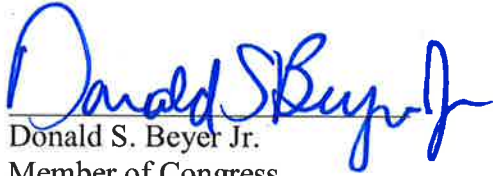
Terri Sewell
Member of Congress



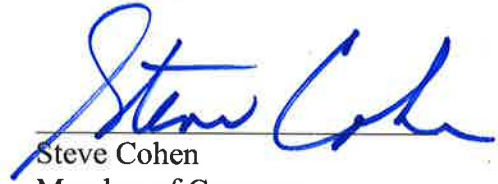
Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress