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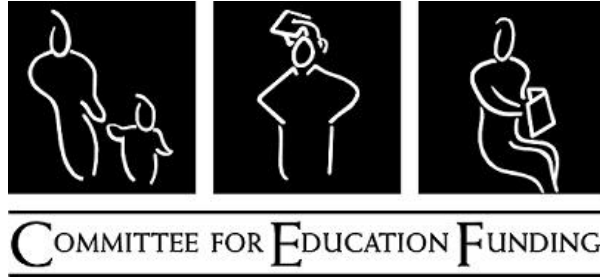
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**Joel Packer**,  
Executive Director  
Committee for Education Funding



October 10, 2011

Dear Senator:

The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 90 education associations and institutions from preschool to postgraduate education, is writing to express our strong support for S. 1660, the American Jobs Act of 2011. In particular, we support Subtitles B (Teacher Stabilization) and D (School Modernization) of Title II. We urge you to vote for cloture on S. 1660 and to pass the bill with these provisions.

The Teacher Stabilization program would provide \$30 billion to save some 280,000 jobs of not just teachers but also other school employees, including counselors, social workers, school nurses, paraprofessionals, librarians, custodians and other educators. Without these funds students will be shortchanged by shorter school weeks, education program eliminations and unreasonable class sizes.

The School Modernization program would provide \$25 billion in critically needed funds to improve learning conditions for students in some 35,000 public schools and \$5 billion to expand and upgrade facilities and capacity at community colleges.

Our students deserve safe, healthy and modern school buildings. It's hard for students to learn in schools with environmental hazards or lacking modern technology and science labs. School districts face an estimated \$271 billion of deferred building and grounds maintenance. The average public school building is 40 years old with many far older. Chronic deferred maintenance and repair can lead to energy inefficiencies, unsafe drinking water, water damage and moldy environments, poor air quality, inadequate health and safety conditions, compromised building security, and structural dangers.

Funds for school modernization would not only improve student learning but would also put hundreds of thousands of Americans in the construction industry back to work.

The \$5 billion for community college facilities is also badly needed. According to the American Association of Community Colleges, "America's community college system was built up over 40 years ago to support education and training activities of that time. These colleges are in desperate need of upgrades to ensure that facilities are

equipped to meet the demands of the 21st century workforce. Deferred maintenance at community colleges is estimated to be \$100 billion.”

The Teacher Stabilization program would respond to the crisis in layoffs in our schools. Students, schools and colleges are struggling with significant state and local budget cuts that have caused large numbers of educator layoffs and major cuts and eliminations in a range of critical education programs.

In the past two years local governments have slashed over 250,000 education jobs, with 24,000 educator jobs lost just last month. Not only is that harmful to those laid-off individuals and their families, it is harmful to local communities and the overall economy. Students shouldn't suffer from the elimination of important classes, libraries and after school programs and unmanageable class sizes resulting from these layoffs.

According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, “Elementary and high schools are receiving less state funding than last year in at least 37 states, and in at least 30 states school funding now stands below 2008 levels – often far below.” A report from the Center on Education Policy found that “the already grim situation for school funding is expected to worsen in the coming school year with a large majority of all school districts, about 70 percent, experiencing funding cuts in school year 2010-11 and an even greater proportion of districts, about 84 percent, anticipating funding cuts in the upcoming school year.” GAO recently reached a similar conclusion when it found that 72 percent of school districts anticipate having less funding in the 2011-12 school year than they did last year.

Failure to enact this bill with these crucial education provisions will harm our students and schools as well as our nation's economic growth and global competitiveness. It's time to pass this bill.

Sincerely,



Abigail Evans  
President



Joel Packer  
Executive Director