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May 6, 2019

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The Honorable Nita M. Lowey,
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Ranking Member
House Appropriations
Committee
H-305 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman
The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
House Appropriations Committee
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

On behalf of the 110 organizations and institutions that are members of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), we write to thank you for the increased investments in education provided in the fiscal year (FY) 2020 appropriations bill that the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee reported out on April 30th. We appreciate that the House approved a meaningful increase in appropriations for the coming year, and that the Appropriations Committee increased the allocation for this bill by \$11.7 billion. That total represents one third of the \$34 billion increase in non-defense discretionary funding Chairwoman Lowey announced she will be providing for FY 2020, reflecting that the important programs in this bill account for one third of all federal non-defense discretionary funding.

The federal government has underinvested in education in recent years, constrained by tight caps on non-defense discretionary funding. Those budget limitations led to cuts in funding for the Department of Education, where funding remained below the FY 2011 level for six years and is still \$7 billion below the FY 2011 level in inflation-adjusted terms. The resulting funding cuts and freezes continue to affect vital programs along the education continuum, including early childhood education, elementary and secondary education, career technical and adult education, higher education, and other educational services outside of classrooms, such as libraries and museums. Congress has voted to raise the caps since their onset. Even with these votes,

1800 M Street NW, 500 South Tower, Washington, DC 20036
(202) 327-8125

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however, the reality of federal investment in education remains one of chronic underinvestment that has left many programs insufficiently funded to fulfill their intended goals and meet student standards. Given past funding limitations, even the increases proposed for some of these programs in FY 2020 might not meet demand or support the needs of a 21st century economy.

CEF urges the full Appropriations Committee to maintain or increase the education funding provided in the FY 2020 bill. CEF continues to request Congress to move quickly to enact an increase in the non-defense discretionary cap for FY 2020 that is at least the level set in H.R. 2021 and that was assumed in the appropriations levels approved by the House last month.

CEF, the nation's oldest and largest education coalition, is a non-partisan organization reflecting the entire education continuum. Our members are teachers and school leaders, parents and students, counselors, school board members, universities and school districts, associations and others who share the common goal of ensuring that education is adequately funded.

Sincerely,



Stephanie Giesecke
President



Sheryl Cohen
Executive Director