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

January 25, 2010

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 80 national education association and institutions from preschool to postgraduate education, we want to express our strong opposition to Sen. Coburn's amendment to H.J. Res. 45 to increase the limit on the public debt.

The Coburn amendment would rescind \$120 billion in enacted funding; including cutting \$3.2 billion from critical education programs. The amendment targets several important education programs including student financial aid needed to increase access to postsecondary education for students from low- and middle-income families, veteran's education benefits to help our nation's veterans pay for higher education, early childhood education, and programs for Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) education.

Passage of the Coburn amendment would be extremely harmful to students, schools, and colleges, especially because all sectors of education are facing significant budget cuts due to huge state budget gaps and college access is threatened due to tuition increases resulting from such state budget cuts. It would also undermine our national efforts to close achievement gaps, increase overall student achievement and the high school graduation rate, increase college access and completion and improve our country's competitiveness in the global economy. It also unfairly targets education benefits for our nation's veterans, which Congress overwhelmingly voted to increase in 2008.

It would also hurt efforts to improve the economy. A new joint report from the National Research Council and the National Academy of Public Administration found that "Education programs have contributed to economic growth while also increasing opportunities for individual advancement." Increased levels of educational attainment also directly correlate with reduced levels of unemployment. Indeed, the unemployment rate is three times higher for those without a high school diploma than for those with a bachelor's or higher degree.

At a time when the federal government should be increasing its investment in education the Coburn amendment would move us backwards. We urge you to vote no.

Sincerely,

Jonathan Fansmith  
President

Joel Packer  
Executive Director