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Joel Packer,
Executive Director
Committee for Education Funding

July 26, 2010

Dear Representative,

The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of over 80 national education associations and institutions from preschool to postgraduate education, strongly urges your continued support for two critical education funding provisions: a \$10 billion education jobs fund to help struggling schools prevent 140,000 layoffs and harmful education program cuts and \$4.95 billion to pay off most of the Pell grant funding shortfall to prevent over eight million college students from having their grants reduced.

Funding for both of these was included in the House-passed amendment to HR 4899, the Fiscal Year 2010 emergency supplemental appropriations bill. Unfortunately, last week the Senate rejected the House-passed amendment. We urge you to craft a revised version of the House amendment that maintains funds for both education jobs and Pell grants, but in a form that can pass the Senate and be signed into law.

States, school districts and colleges face a serious fiscal crisis. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) education funds have saved over 300,000 education jobs, prevented massive layoffs and education cuts, and increased access to postsecondary education. However, the termination of ARRA funds will result in substantial cuts and layoffs at all levels of education. Schools and colleges are facing additional deep cuts in state aid and layoffs due to unprecedented and growing state budget gaps.

A survey by the American Association of School Administrators found that 275,000 teachers and other education employees face layoffs in the upcoming school year. A recent report [*School Districts' Perspectives on the Economic Stimulus Package*](#), found that "While nearly two-thirds of all school districts have used the federal stimulus money from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) to save or create teaching jobs in the 2009-10 school year, as many as three quarters of the nation's school districts expect to cut teaching jobs in 2010-11 due to budget decreases..."

The recently enacted Health Care and Education Affordability Reconciliation Act (HCEARA) included substantial sums to maintain the Pell Grant program and provide for increases in the future. Yet as the economy has struggled, more students with greater need have become eligible for Pell Grants, resulting in an

CEF Letter on HR 4899, the Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Bill

accumulated shortfall of \$5.667 billion in the program. Without addressing this shortfall, the Fiscal Year 2011 maximum award of \$5,550 could be slashed by \$845, or more than 15 percent, undermining the commitment just made in HCEARA. The \$4.95 billion contained in this bill is a strong step towards keeping the promise Congress has made to America's students.

For the sake of our students, schools, and colleges, we cannot afford any further delay.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Fansmith
President



Joel Packer
Executive Director