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Sarah Abernathy, Executive
Director, Committee for Education
Funding

September 2, 2021

Dear Members of the Senate HELP Committee and of the House Education and Labor Committee:

We write on behalf of the more than 100 education organizations, institutions, and others that are members of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) to urge you to include the President's requested historic investments in education in the reconciliation legislation your committees are currently drafting. This year offers an unprecedented opportunity to make long-needed investments along the education continuum, providing immediate support in the fiscal year 2022 appropriations bills in addition to your current undertaking to provide long-term investments in a reconciliation bill. The President's economic agenda expands federal support for education in vital ways that will have a profound impact on teaching and learning, supporting families and communities, and boosting the economy by creating an internationally competitive workforce.

The reconciliation bill offers an opportunity to make transformative investments in education. As you know, the President's American Jobs Plan and American Families Plan include new and expanded investments covering early childhood education and care; Head Start and child care provider pay; teacher development; career pathways for middle and high school students; adult education; broadband access; upgrading and building safe child care facilities, schools, and community colleges; and expanded college affordability, access, and completion including a significant investment in Pell Grants as well as free community college. CEF urges you to address the needs of the education continuum as you draft your committee's reconciliation legislation.

The federal government has underinvested in education due to tight caps on non-defense discretionary funding in recent years. Those budget constraints led to cuts in funding for Education, where funding remained below the fiscal year 2011 level for six years and even now funding for on-going education programs is still \$7 billion below that 2011 level in inflation-adjusted terms. Well before the pandemic hit there was a need for greater federal investments, and that need has not gone away. CEF urges you to tackle the long-term education needs in the reconciliation bill.

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

Sincerely,

Handwritten signature of Luis Maldonado in black ink.

Luis Maldonado
President

Handwritten signature of Sarah Abernathy in blue ink.

Sarah Abernathy
Executive Director