

11.23.21

Template of letter to Members of Congress urging quick action on FY 2022 appropriations

Dear Members of Congress:

I am writing on behalf of [*name and description of your organization/institution*] to urge Congress to quickly pass a fiscal year (FY) 2022 appropriations bill with vital increases in education. This summer the House passed its Labor-HHS-Education bill that provides the 41% increase the President requested for education programs, including a [*fill in any specific programs you want to highlight*]. The bill released this fall by the Senate Appropriations Committee has a slightly smaller though still historically large increase for education, yet education funding is currently frozen through December 3 at the levels from the last fiscal year. We urge you not to extend this freeze for months and instead to enact full-year funding at the highest possible levels, supporting much-needed investments in education as soon as possible.

The COVID-relief funding Congress enacted earlier this year will help with emergency costs caused by the pandemic but does not address the long-standing education needs that have been underfunded for the last decade: funding for the Department of Education is now more than \$7 billion below the level of FY 2011 in inflation-adjusted terms. [*Include a sentence describing the needs in the program/s you want to highlight.*] Every month that Congress extends the freeze at last year's levels is another month means losing another month where we could be improving teaching and learning, and allowing students, administrators, and institutions to effectively plan their services. [*Describe a way that not knowing funding for a specific program harms it – i.e., students don't know the level of their Pell grant for next year, districts don't know how much federal support they will have for Title I salaries or teacher training, afterschool programs don't know what they can afford to offer, etc.*]

Compounding the uncertainty of not knowing how much funding they will get for the fiscal year that started more than one month ago, education programs are also waiting to see if Congress will provide additional support in the Build Back Better Act. We urge Congress to act quickly to increase investments in education that are overdue and are more important than ever as students and educators grapple with the challenges of the pandemic.