

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2009

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218 U.S. Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charlie Rangel
Chairman
House Committee on Ways & Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Dave Camp
Ranking Member
1139-E Longworth House Office Building
House Committee on Ways & Means
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Henry Waxman
Chairman
House Energy and Commerce Committee
2125 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Obey, Rangel and Waxman and Ranking Members Lewis and Camp:

As you work to reconcile the House and Senate passed versions of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we urge you to protect taxpayers, teacher jobs, and the futures of our children by including the House's more robust levels of education funding in your conference report.

With America's economy facing its toughest times since World War II and tax revenues plummeting, states now face a \$91 billion education funding shortfall. Without correction, this gap will lead to teacher layoffs, higher state and local taxes, and a drop-off in resources for classroom instruction. At a time when the federal government is proposing to address the economic recession with a package of tax cuts and stimulus spending, it makes no sense to have states simultaneously raise taxes and cut spending. In addition, deep cuts to state and local education budgets would deny a quality education to and limit future earnings for thousands, and have long-term negative impacts on our economic productivity.

In negotiations over the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, both House and Senate leaders proposed, and the House has passed, \$140 billion in aid for education, including \$79 billion to stabilize states' finances, \$14 - \$16 billion to improve and repair public school facilities, \$13.1 billion for Title I classroom assistance, \$13.6 billion for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), and \$2.1 billion for Head Start and Early Head Start. However, the legislation passed by the Senate on February 10 cuts \$70 billion from the initial bicameral proposal.

Specifically, the Senate cuts \$40 billion for state fiscal stabilization meant to protect teacher jobs and stave off tax hikes, eliminates \$20 billion that would fund school construction and create 200,000 jobs, and strikes over \$1 billion from Head Start.

The importance of the education funding provided in the House version is fourfold: It prevents state and local tax increases, it prevents teachers from being laid off, it creates jobs, and it protects the future of our children and our economy. Economists and scientists agree: Strategic, targeted investments in education are needed to create jobs, give America's children the skills they need to compete globally, and to put our economy back on the road to recovery.

We strongly urge you to remain mindful of our economic recovery, the jobs of our teachers and the futures of our children, and retain the House passed education funding levels in your conference report for the Economic Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

Sincerely,

House of Representatives

Eric Lipton

Mary Jo Kilroy

Mr. [Signature]

Marcus L. Dudge

David Toroko

Michael E. Mann

Kelly Gallagher

Barry Lynn

Pat Schack

Don Meffer

Carl

Betsy Mack

Devin Halverson

Tom Funn

Alan Grayson

James A. Stires

Jerry Landry

Jim Parks

Larry Kissel

Suzanne M. Kosmas

Y. King [Signature]