



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

June 1, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Majority Leader McConnell, Minority Leader McCarthy, and Minority Leader Schumer,

We write to strongly urge you to include at least \$305 billion in K-12 education stabilization funding as you negotiate coronavirus response legislation. Given the decreases in state revenues that support education funding and the new expenses facing schools in adapting to the new learning environment, state education budgets across the U.S. will struggle to meet the long-term demands of providing high-quality learning to all their students. While we strongly support the \$90 billion in education funding included in H.R. 6800, The Heroes Act, about \$58 billion of that funding will support K-12 education. Comparatively, current projections by Center on Budget and Policy Priorities on state revenue shortfalls¹ coupled with necessary new education expenses² results in a need of of \$305 billion. We urge you to prioritize our students, educators, and school districts, and ensure they are not left behind as you negotiate the next relief package.

States are experiencing, and will continue to experience, increased health care and unemployment-related costs that will put further pressure on state education funding. Furthermore, states face additional increased education costs including ensuring that all students have full access to distance learning, providing expanded learning opportunities to address any interruptions in learning, and the school meals needed for these additional days of school.

¹ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/states-start-grappling-with-hit-to-tax-collections>

² <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/what-will-it-take-stabilize-schools-time-covid-19>

Without federal support, the fallout from state budgets will have drastic consequences for education, particularly students' access to teachers. A 25% reduction in state education funding will result in the elimination of more than 580,000 education positions.³ This is more than 15% of the nation's educator workforce.

This pandemic is causing significant declines in state income and sales tax and other revenues that substantially fund our nation's public schools. Current projections by the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (CBPP) show state revenue shortfalls could ultimately reach about 10% in the current fiscal year (FY) and as much as 25% in FY21, which translates to state education funding shortfall of \$305 billion.⁴

The projected cuts to public education spending due to our current crisis are two and half times worse than the Great Recession's impact on our public education.⁵ This is particularly concerning because even with substantial federal intervention through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and a subsequent Educator Job Fund bill, states took at least 6 years (from 2008 to 2014) to recover the ground they lost in education funding, with some never catching up to pre-recession levels.⁶ Without significant federal support, our states will struggle to support their public schools, and our students will feel the brunt of the result.

The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on K-12 education is being felt by schools across America as they continue to hold remote learning sessions, provide meals to students, and come up with curriculum to educate special needs students. As states work to set their FY21 budgets and continue to provide a high-quality education to our students, federal support is critical to stabilize their K-12 education system over the next 18 months. Therefore, we urge that as you negotiate coronavirus response legislation, you allocate at least \$305 billion to a State Fiscal Stabilization Fund for grants to States to support statewide and local funding specifically for our K-12 public schools. Our children's education is too important to risk.

Sincerely,



RASHIDA TLAIB
Member of Congress



JAHANA HAYES
Member of Congress



AYANNA PRESSLEY
Member of Congress

RAUL M. GRIJALVA
Member of Congress

JOYCE BEATTY
Member of Congress

JOE NEGUSE
Member of Congress

ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON
Member of Congress

JESUS G. "CHUY" GARCIA
Member of Congress

TERRI A. SEWELL
Member of Congress

³ <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/impact-covid-19-recession-teaching-positions>

⁴ <https://www.cbpp.org/research/state-budget-and-tax/states-start-grappling-with-hit-to-tax-collections>

⁵ <https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/impact-covid-19-recession-teaching-positions>

⁶ <https://www.cbpp.org/blog/k-12-funding-still-lagging-in-many-states>

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