



The Honorable Robert Aderholt
 Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Labor, Health and Human Resources,
 Education and Related Agencies
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
 Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
 Labor, Health and Human Resources,
 Education and Related Agencies
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
 Ranking Member, Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Resources, Education and Related Agencies
 U.S. House of Representatives
 Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
 Ranking Member, Appropriations
 Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
 Resources, Education and Related Agencies
 U.S. Senate
 Washington, DC 20515

February 8, 2024

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, representing school superintendents, transportation providers, rural educators, school business officials and educational service agency administrators, we write to urge Congress to protect investments in education within the federal fiscal year 2024 (FY24) and call attention to the critical federal formula programs that are the backbone of our nation’s educational system. As education leaders who serve as stewards of public dollars, we are deeply familiar with the pressures you face when allocating limited public (federal) funding.

We understand the competing demands and necessity to make cuts under the constraint of the spending caps, while at the same time holding true to the important work of protecting funding that supports our most vulnerable student populations. As you move forward with final appropriations decisions, it is important that you ensure that education investment is protected. As such, we strongly support the prioritization of the following appropriations investments:

Title I Part A: Title I Part A is the backbone of the premier federal K-12 education law. The breadth and depth of Title I make it uniquely positioned for supporting districts in their work to support children—particularly those in poverty—in meeting challenging state academic content and achievement standards.

IDEA Part B: Congress has never honored its commitment to fund 40 percent of the additional cost associated with its mandate to educate students in special education. *Any reduction of the federal investment in this program would be a shameful step backward in providing critical supports for students with disabilities and districts’ efforts to ensure they receive a high-quality education.*

Rural Education Achievement Program: REAP is a cornerstone program for addressing the unique needs of our nation’s rural schools, which serve more than 9 million students. Investments in REAP ensure that small and low-income rural districts are able to provide equitable educational opportunities to their students.

When adjusted for inflation, FY23 investments in education are already below the investment level of FY2011. That means, adjusting for inflation, the federal government is spending less per pupil for our high school seniors than it did when those same seniors were in kindergarten. Education funding must remain a top priority for federal government funding in 2024, and we encourage you to advance a final FY2024 appropriations package that reflects our requests, above. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association
Association of Educational Service Agencies
Association of School Business Officials International
National Rural Education Association
National Association for Pupil Transportation