U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

July 30, 2020

Dear Representative,

On behalf of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, representing the nation's 14,000 public school systems and the superintendents at their helm, I write to share our position on a handful of amendments to the FY2021 Labor-HHS-Education and other appropriations bills included in the Department of Defense Appropriations Act, 2021 (H.R. 7617). In addition to the amendments outlined below, we applaud and support your work to protect and prioritize investment in critical formula programs serving students with the greatest need, including ESSA Title I and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA).

OPPOSE #219 by Rep. Allen (GA): This amendment reduces education funding by 5 percent across the board at the exact time schools need more money, not less, to reopen safely and provide meaningful distance learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

SUPPORT #253 by Rep. Jayapal (WA) et. al.: This amendment prohibits USED from enforcing its Interim Final Rule, "CARES Act Programs; Equitable Services to Students and Teachers in Non-Public Schools." The rule is an unlawful interpretation of the CARES Act that redirects COVID-19 emergency aid intended for public schools to private school students.

SUPPORT#260 by Rep. Levin (MI): This amendment prohibits USED from using funds to set up and fund school vouchers described as "Education Freedom Scholarships."

SUPPORT #297 by Reps. Trahan (MA) and Jayapal (WA): This amendment reiterates that COVID-19 emergency education aid is to be used as Congress intended—not redirected from public to private schools unless specifically authorized by the applicable law.

Thank you for considering these recommendations, and for working to ensure adequate funding for our nation's public schools and the 50 million students they serve. Please let me know if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Noelle Ellerson Ng
Associate Executive Director, Advocacy & Governance
AASA, The School Superintendents Association