



June 19, 2012

U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator,

On behalf of the American Association of School Administrators, the Association of Education Service Agencies, the National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition and the National Rural Education Association, we are writing to express our strong support for an amendment being offered by Senator Murray. Sen. Murray's amendment (#2455) would require the Office of Management and Budget to submit to Congress a detailed report on the impact of sequestration cuts for both defense and nondefense funding. **We strongly urge you to support Amendment #2455 to S 3240 in tomorrow's vote.** Further, we urge you to oppose Senator McCain's amendment (#2162), which while similar in requesting a report, only examines the impact on defense programs. It is imperative that the American public and the officials elected to represent them have complete information about the impact of sequestration, covering all aspects of the budget, not just defense.

AASA, AESA, NREAC and NREA represent a broad and diverse group of educators and administrators, all committed to improving student learning in our nation's public schools. The cuts of sequestration are met with concern and many questions. Some education programs are forward funded, some are current-year funded and some have advanced appropriations. It is unclear how the various streams and types of funding would be impacted by the sequester, including what the dollar/percent cut will be and when the sequestration cuts will take place. While our advocacy is focused on education, we anticipate that similar questions are being asked across all areas of the federal budget, and Senator Murray's amendment is a way to answer these questions and get critical information to both Congress and the public.

Non-defense discretionary spending—including education—has already taken a significant and disproportionate cut in federal funding. In fact, between the FY11 and FY12 annual appropriations process, education funding was reduced by \$1.48 billion. Since 2010, more than 50 education programs have been eliminated, a funding reduction exceeding \$1.2 billion. All of these cuts came while the nation's schools continue to feel the effects of the recession. These cuts have diluted the fragile economic recovery taking place at the state and local level. The further cuts of sequestration would increase class size and reduce programs/services for students and run counter to the good policies necessary to address the country's fiscal challenges. The cuts of sequestration harm our nation's global competitiveness and economic future by completely undermining progress on improving student achievement, closing achievement gaps and increasing high school graduation and post-secondary education attendance.

Senator Murray's amendment represents a strong first step in the right direction toward giving Congress the information it needs to resume the work of the stalled Joint Deficit Commission and identify a balanced, bipartisan proposal to replace the blunt, draconian cuts of sequestration. Such efforts to avoid the cuts of sequestration will help avoid teacher layoffs, reductions in professional development, and a backslide in student learning and opportunity. The information to be collected as a result of Senator Murray's amendment will be helpful to educators and the public, and **we urge you to support Amendment #2455 to S 3240.**

Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact Noelle Ellerson, Assistant Director, Policy Analysis & Advocacy at AASA. She can be reached at nellerson@aasa.org

Sincerely,

Noelle Ellerson, American Association of School Administrators
Lee Warne, Executive Director, Association of Education Service Agencies
Joe Bard, Director, National Rural Education Advocacy Coalition
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