

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 25, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education & Related
Agencies
United States Congress
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education &
Related Agencies
United States Congress
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray:

We are writing to request that you include no less than \$2.295 billion in funding for the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program (Title II, Part A) as part of the fiscal year 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill. In addition, we request that you include \$30 million in funding for the School Leader Recruitment and Support Program (SLRSP).

Title II, Part A provides flexible funding to states, districts, and schools to strengthen teacher and school leader effectiveness and improve student outcomes, especially for children from low-income families and communities. The bipartisan ESEA reauthorization strengthened the program by providing new opportunities for states to use Title II, Part A funds to invest in principal leadership, job-embedded professional learning and leadership opportunities for teachers, and other evidence-based leadership strategies that will lead to improved student outcomes. Many states are planning to take advantage of the optional three percent set-aside in Title II, Part A to invest in school leadership. Funding Title II, Part A at no less than \$2.295 billion will support momentum at the state level to use these dollars more effectively by encouraging states, districts, and schools to move forward with plans to invest in evidence-based, locally-driven strategies to strengthen school leadership.

SLRSP – the only federally authorized program dedicated specifically to strengthening school leadership – is the next generation of the School Leadership Program, which has seeded principal training and support programs with a demonstrated track record of effectiveness. Through this program, aspiring principals gain access to high-quality preparation programs, sitting principals receive critical professional development supports, and thousands of teachers – along with hundreds of thousands of students – work and learn in schools where the leadership has the tools to help them maximize their potential. Recognizing the importance of school leaders, Congress included this important program in the bipartisan reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). Funding SLRSP at \$30 million will allow for the awarding of new, competitive grants to support the recruitment, preparation, placement, support, and retention of effective principals in high-need schools.

Support for SLRSP and Title II, Part A is essential because strong school leaders have an outsized effect on student achievement, dramatically improving the quality of teaching, creating positive school environments, and raising student achievement in a school. Both programs can help develop a pipeline of skilled new principals and target experienced principals who are in

their first year tackling the challenges of school turnaround and for whom strong support and high-quality professional learning are particularly critical. By leveraging new pathways to prepare and support outstanding educators to lead our schools, SLRSP and Title II, Part A-supported leadership strategies can amplify other investments in educator quality and lead to improved outcomes for teachers, students, and families.

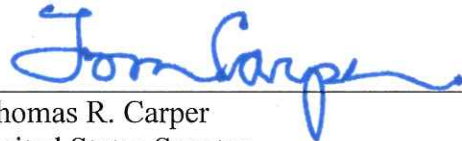
These targeted federal investments can have a huge influence on locally-driven efforts to get well-prepared, well-supported principals in our highest-need schools. We urge you to include \$30 million in funding for SLRSP and no less than \$2.295 billion in funding for Title II, Part A to help ensure that school leaders have access to the preparation and support that enable them to drive positive change for students and teachers.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Al Franken
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



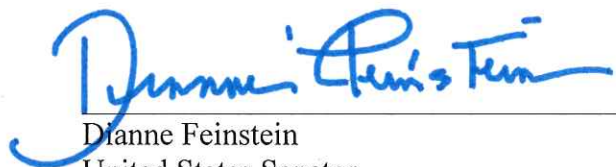
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



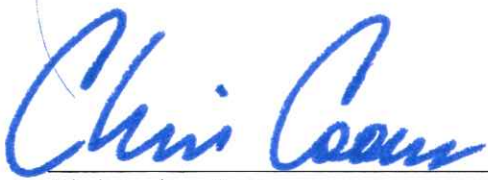
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



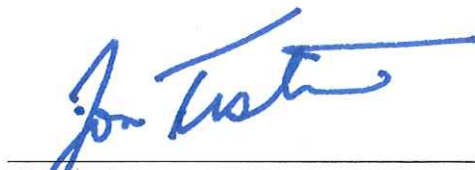
Jack Reed
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



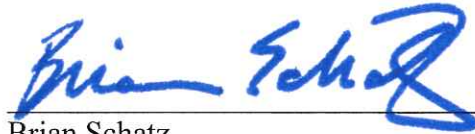
Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



Jon Tester
United States Senator



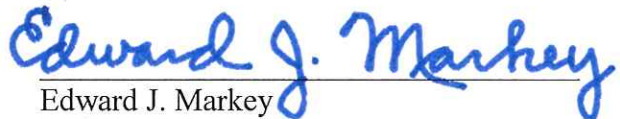
Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
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Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
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Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



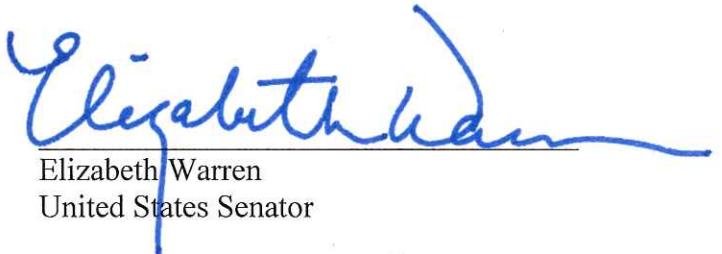
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



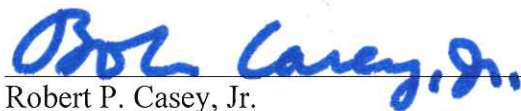
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



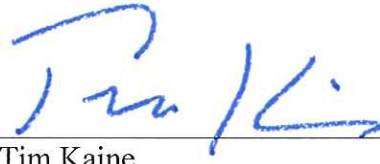
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



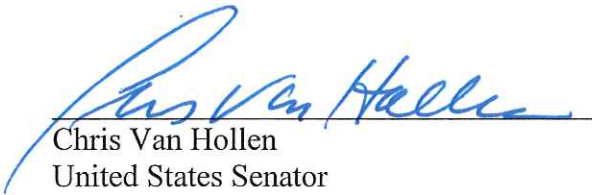
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Mazie K. Hirono
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Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator