



Brian Sandoval
Governor of Nevada
Chair

Steve Bullock
Governor of Montana
Vice Chair

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June 14, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services and Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services and Education
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair
Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services and Education
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

Dear Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the nation's governors, we urge Congress to uphold the state-federal partnership in education and workforce training by building on investments in the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2018 and fiscal year 2018 Omnibus. Last year, governors weighed in on federal education and workforce appropriations for the first time in nearly a decade. Prioritizing funding for federal education and workforce programs in the budget and appropriations for fiscal year 2019 is critical to ensure state economies remain on a strong foundation for continued growth.

Implementation of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) and the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) remains ongoing in the states. Without sustainable funding to continue the state and local innovation ushered in by these laws, governors' efforts to improve K-12 education and federal workforce development programs will fall short of Congress' vision.

Governors collectively call on Congress to prioritize investments in the following critical federal programs to ensure that costs are not shifted to states, program objectives are met and citizens in our states are prepared for successful lives:

- **All programs under the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA)** – States' transition from the federal overreach of No Child Left Behind cannot proceed without the investments Congress promised states for programs under ESSA, including funding for Supporting Effective Instruction state grants, 21st Century Community Learning Centers and continued growth of the Student Support and Academic Enrichments block grant.
- **All programs under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)** – Governors have leveraged federal job-training funds to recover from recessions, grow small businesses and attract industries to their states. More than 30 states are leveraging WIOA funding for apprenticeships and work-based learning. Without further investment in WIOA formula programs, Wagner-Peyser and the Governors' workforce reserve, state economies will be at risk.

- **State grants under the Perkins Career and Technical Education Act** – Governors are using Perkins funding to reduce remediation, fuel innovation in schools and provide students with hands-on learning in real-world environments. The federal funding stream for Perkins must remain strong to ensure students are prepared for a 21st century economy.
- **Part B and Part C state grants under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)** – For decades, the federal government has consistently failed to meet its commitment to fund, in full, 40 percent of the excess costs to states of educating students with disabilities. Without addressing the underfunding of IDEA, Congress will exacerbate the mandates under this law.
- **Preschool Development Grants (PDG)** – Governors understand that early childhood education is a key component of building a literate and skilled workforce. Over the past four years, PDG has become an indispensable tool for governors in 18 states to expand access and improve quality for our youngest learners. We need sustainable funding for this program so that governors in even more states have access to these opportunities. Also, the Administration for Children and Families' (ACF) implementation of PDG has been characterized by a lack of transparency, few opportunities for feedback and limited state engagement. Through the appropriations process, Congress should ensure that ACF maintains strong communication with states and stakeholders as they implement PDG.
- **Competitive Funding for Apprenticeships** – The first wave of competitive apprenticeship grants appropriated by Congress in 2016 flowed through governors to spur innovation from the highest level of state government. Through the Appropriations Act, Congress should ensure governors are the conduit through which any future resources for apprenticeship expansion flow to ensure previous investments in states to increase the number of apprentices can continue and local innovation can be spurred regionally and statewide.

As Congress determines how to appropriately invest in these programs, governors ask that you carefully consider the impact of any changes or cuts to these programs on state budgets at a time when both federal and state resources are limited. Governors stand ready to partner with you to creatively address fiscal challenges and produce federal funding solutions that allow the economy of our nation and each state to remain strong.

Sincerely,



Governor Brian Sandoval
State of Nevada



Governor Steve Bullock
State of Montana

Cc:

Chair and Ranking Member of the Senate Committee on Appropriations
Chair and Ranking Member of the House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Mick Mulvaney, Director of the Office of Management and Budget