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July 18, 2017

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the three million members of the National Education Association (NEA) and the students they serve, we urge you to Vote No on the FY18 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations measure that drastically cuts education, eliminates Title II, and would undermine implementation of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). Votes associated with this issue may be included in the NEA Legislative Report Card for the 115th Congress.

The LHHS funding bill cuts education by \$2.4 billion (3.5 percent below the 2017 level), completely eliminates Title II (within ESSA), and slashes 21st Century Community Learning Centers that provide important afterschool services to students most in need.

Congress must start down the path of providing adequate resources, especially for students most in need, to realize the full potential of the bipartisan ESSA. Sadly, the bill before the Committee fails to increase funding for Title I and entirely eliminates the \$2.1 billion Title II-A program which will severely inhibit states and local school districts from effectively and properly implementing ESSA, just as they are beginning that process. This law provides more authority to parents, educators, and leaders at the state and local level to ensure that students have well-resourced neighborhood public schools that are desirable places to be and where students' natural curiosity is inspired, setting every student in America off toward a great future.

The proposed elimination of Title II is particularly egregious and will harm students and schools across the country. It will deprive millions of students of opportunities by eliminating funding that will result in nearly 8,500 educators losing their jobs, slashing funding for class-size reduction and limiting or eliminating professional development opportunities for nearly 2.5 million educators. [Click here](#) to see a state-by-state impact of the Title II elimination.

Instead, we urge you to support the amendment by Representative Price (D-NC) which would restore Title II-A to the FY17 level of \$2.1 billion.

We also urge you to oppose any amendment that would divert public money to private school vouchers or related schemes.

For too long Congress has tied its own hands with senseless and untenable budget caps, resulting in wholly inadequate funding levels for critical programs like education. This bill is yet another reflection of that problem that only Congress can fix. Our students should not have to wait any longer.

Investing in our children is investing in our nation's future. We urge you to oppose the Labor-HHS-Education FY18 appropriations bill and instead turn your attention to making increased investments in education, especially for students most in need.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Egan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association