

March 9, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran  
Chairman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Room S-128, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chairman  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Committee on Appropriations  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairmen Cochran, Blunt, Frelinghuysen, and Cole, and Ranking Members Leahy, Murray, Lowey and DeLauro:

As you finalize the FY18 spending bill, we urge you to provide *at least* level funding for the Teacher Quality Partnership (TQP) grant program authorized under Title II of the Higher Education Act. The TQP Grant program is the only federal initiative targeted directly to higher education-based teacher preparation programs, and it is designed to help ensure that high-need schools are staffed with profession-ready teachers. As institutions of higher education prepare and support nearly 90% of all teachers, a federal investment in reforming and strengthening these programs is critical. TQP helps to ensure that high-need schools are staffed with profession-ready teachers.

At a time when the profession faces declining enrollment, teacher shortages, and retention challenges, federal investments in solutions such as the TQP grant program are vital. TQP grants support intensive partnerships between high-need school districts, high-need public schools, institutions of higher education, and other eligible entities to prepare profession-ready teachers. These grants leverage federal dollars by requiring a 100% match and can be used to reform undergraduate preparation programs or to develop teaching residency programs at the graduate level. These partnerships require that programs include at least one year of clinical experience, which research has shown to be crucial for teacher effectiveness and teacher retention. Grantees are required to offer no less than two years of induction for their graduates and offer professional development to the entire school where they are teaching. In addition, grantees must prepare new teachers to teach students with disabilities and English language learners, to use research and data to inform instruction, and to have literacy teaching skills so that upon program completion teachers are fully prepared for the rigors of providing daily classroom instruction. Furthermore, graduates of TQP-funded residency programs must fulfill a three-year teaching obligation in the high-need district in which they were prepared.

TQP grantees have had a major impact on teacher preparation reform and on the quality of teaching in communities across the country. In fact, Old Dominion University, a 2009 grantee, solved the STEM teacher shortage in its partner district and continues to address workforce needs to this day. Through the 68 programs

that have received funding via the TQP grant over 500 high-need public schools are seeing improvements in the quality and retention of their teachers, and in the quality of their students' learning experiences and achievements. It is essential to maintain funding for this program so that we can continue the important work of transforming teacher preparation throughout the country while deepening the partnerships with the communities in which they serve.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to ensure that America's students have a profession-ready teacher in every classroom.

Sincerely,

AASA, The School Superintendents Association  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Council on Education  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium  
Association of Educational Service Agencies  
Association of Independent Liberal Arts Colleges for Teacher Education  
Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents  
Association of School Business Officials International  
Association of Teacher Educators  
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities  
Council of Academic Deans from Research Education Institutions  
Higher Education Consortium for Special Education  
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities  
Joint National Committee for Languages  
National Association of Community College Teacher Education Programs  
National Association of Elementary School Principals  
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
National Association of Secondary School Principals  
National Association of State Directors of Special Education  
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards  
National Council for Languages and International Studies  
National Council of Teachers of Mathematics  
National Network of State Teachers of the Year  
National Rural Education Advocacy Consortium  
National Rural Education Association  
National Science Teachers Association  
Public Advocacy for Kids  
Rural School and Community Trust  
STEM Education Coalition  
Teacher Education Council of State Colleges and Universities  
Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children