

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

June 28, 2021

The Honorable Christopher A. Coons
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Coons and Ranking Member Graham,

Thank you for your commitment to fighting extreme poverty and improving education for children in need around the world. We are writing to urge you to provide strong support for Basic Education in the fiscal year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, including funding for U.S. Government international education programs, the Global Partnership for Education, and Education Cannot Wait.

Bolstering global education serves U.S. interests by building the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators, strengthening important diplomatic and cultural ties with countries, and promoting our shared goal of building a more stable, prosperous and equitable world.

COVID-19 has disrupted the education of over 91 percent of the world's children and youth and severely exacerbated a pre-existing global learning crisis. Worldwide, 826 million students do not have a computer and 706 million students lack internet access at home. For children who have been deprived of access to school and distance learning during the pandemic, learning loss and other harms pose a generational threat that could widen existing gaps in educational and economic attainment in low- and middle-income countries. Research indicates that a three-month school closure could cost children over a year's worth of learning and, if left unaddressed, many children may never catch up.

U.S. Basic Education assistance strives to increase access to quality education, provide children with foundational reading, math, social and emotional skills, and prepare youth for successful careers. To recover from COVID-19 globally and prepare for future emergencies that could further disrupt education, U.S. foreign assistance will need to support improved access to distance learning materials and technology, safe school reopening plans, reenrollment initiatives for out-of-school children and youth, and curriculum and teaching adaptation to ensure that all students get back on track and reach their full potential.

U.S. support for multilateral partnerships, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), complements our bilateral programs and leverages additional resources for this important work. During the COVID-19 pandemic, multilateral organizations have been quick to respond to the dire education needs of children. GPE has mobilized \$500 million to help developing countries mitigate both the immediate and long-term

disruptions to education being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. ECW activated \$140 million in 2020, including through its First Emergency Response fund, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which aims to reach 32 million children in 34 countries.

To sustain and enhance international efforts to support learning during and after COVID-19, it will be imperative for the Subcommittee to fully fund Basic Education in the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



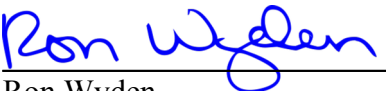
Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator



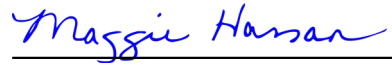
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



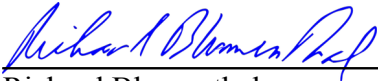
Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



Maria Cantwell
United States Senator



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



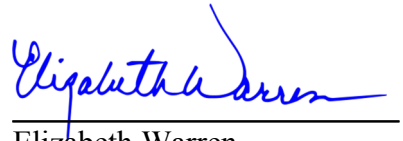
Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



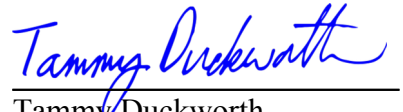
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator




Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator



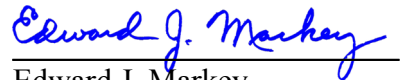
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Jacky Rosen
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Mazie K. Hirono
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Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Raphael G. Warnock
United States Senator



Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



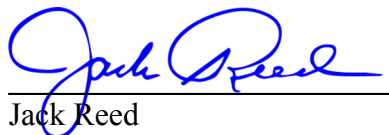
Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator



Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



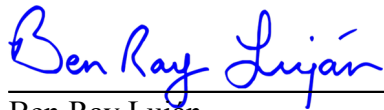
Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



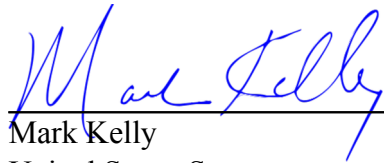
Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Ben Ray Lujan
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Mark Kelly
United States Senator



Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



/s/
MARTIN HEINRICH
United States Senator



Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator