

June 7, 2012

Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

**Re: *FY2013 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies Appropriations bill***

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the 95,000 school board members and the state school boards associations representing more than 49 million public school students throughout the nation, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) is writing regarding the FY2013 Labor-Health & Human Services-Education Appropriations bill.

NSBA urges you to preserve funding for special education and Title I grants for disadvantaged students in the FY2013 funding bill. Full funding for special education grants under the *Individuals With Disabilities Education Act* (IDEA), Title I and other programs including teacher quality, career and technical education, and English Language Acquisition is critical to the success of our nation's students and school districts. Protecting baseline funding for these priorities, and providing the increases needed to address existing shortfalls, will help our school districts and states deliver education services necessary to rebuild our economy.

As state education aid continues to be impacted by state budgets that have not fully rebounded from the recession, it is even more critical that local K-12 educational programs receive the needed federal investment. As you may be aware, since Fiscal Year 2011, federal funding for elementary and secondary education programs has been reduced by more than \$835 million through program eliminations and cuts. Any further cuts would affect core instruction and cause even larger class sizes that do not facilitate differentiated instruction and other specialized curricula that many students need. Further loss of funding would also mean the loss of highly effective instructional staff for intervention programs such as reading and math, as well as other programs and services that help advance the nation's students.

NSBA urges you to provide the highest possible allocation for IDEA grants. Local school district budgets continue to face cuts while special education costs continue to increase. Special education expenditures by local communities take up higher percentages of school budgets each year, often forcing school districts to reduce general education budgets to make up the shortfall. A path toward full funding of IDEA is needed to help districts fulfill the IDEA federal mandate that has existed for almost 40 years, but has never been fully funded.

Finally, NSBA urges your support to develop a balanced budget that avoids the across-the-board cuts that are scheduled by sequestration, which would occur this January. Estimates by the Congressional Budget Office indicate that sequestration will mean a cut of 7.8 percent to almost all education programs, thereby



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Through our State  
Associations, NSBA  
Advocates for Equity  
and Excellence in  
Public Education  
through School  
Board Leadership*

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**Office of Advocacy**

- *C. Ed Massey  
President*
- *Anne L. Bryant  
Executive Director*
- *Michael A. Resnick  
Associate  
Executive Director*

reducing Title I grants by approximately \$1.2 billion and IDEA Part B grants by approximately \$900 million. According to the U.S. Department of Education, the cut to Title I could mean denying funding to nearly 4,000 schools serving more than 1.6 million disadvantaged students, and more than 16,000 teachers and aides could lose their jobs.

Secretary Duncan also stated during a hearing before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies that the estimated 7.8 percent cut to special education grants “could translate to the loss of 10,000 special education teachers, aides, and other staff providing essential instruction and other support to children with disabilities.”

We urge you to preserve education investments even during these tough economic times. High-quality public schools provide our students with the knowledge and skills needed to compete globally, and also attract and retain businesses that are essential to local economies. America’s economic success for long-term global competitiveness will depend on how smartly and adequately all levels of government invest in public education today.

If further information is needed regarding this letter, please contact Deborah Rigsby at (703) 833-6208, or via email at [drigsby@nsba.org](mailto:drigsby@nsba.org).

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to working with you as the FY2013 appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

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

Michael A. Resnick  
Associate Executive Director