



The Education Trust

Closing the gaps in opportunity and achievement, pre-k through college.

June 28, 2018

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Labor-H Approp. Subcom.
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Labor-H Approp. Subcom.
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members,

On behalf of The Education Trust, an organization dedicated to closing long-standing gaps in opportunity and achievement that separate low-income students and students of color from their peers, we write to express appreciation to the Committee for rejecting the Trump administration's Department of Education budget request for the FY19 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill.

We are grateful the Committee made choices to invest in students and educators this fiscal year. There are two pieces of this bill we particularly want to highlight:

- The bill increases the maximum award for Pell Grants by \$100, enabling the maximum award to roughly keep pace with inflation. We appreciate this investment and encourage you to work with your authorizing colleagues to advocate for reinstating Pell's mandatory adjustment for inflation.
- We are very pleased to see the Committee maintain support for Title II, Part A. The bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) revised Title II to direct funds toward more evidence-based uses and demonstrated Congress' belief in the importance of teachers and school leaders. These funds are vital in every state, where schools and districts use these dollars to recruit, train, support, and retain teachers and school leaders.

There are two areas, however, that we believe need improvement:

- We are disappointed by the rescission to the Pell Grant's temporary reserves. As you know, the temporary reserves exist because of changing economic trends and recent cuts in eligibility. These funds are a critical tool for protecting access to higher education for low-income students and students of color. Raiding the reserves will only hasten the time when there is a deficit in the program and students are again vulnerable to cuts.

- We also urge you to restore funding at its FY17 level — \$14.5M — to the School Leader Recruitment and Support Program, a small but worthwhile program that promotes evidence-based, locally driven strategies that improve access to a pipeline of effective principals and school leaders in high-need schools.

We look forward to working with you and your counterparts in the House as the FY19 appropriations process moves forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John B. King Jr.", with a stylized, cursive script.

John B. King Jr.
President and CEO
The Education Trust

cc: Senate Appropriations Committee