

September 2, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
United States Senate  
170 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Capito,

We are writing to thank you for your leadership in urging the Trump administration to release critical funding for the 2025-2026 school year that had been illegally withheld. Your advocacy was essential to protecting students, families, and educators across the country from unnecessary and harmful cuts. We are also appreciative of your commitment to upholding the integrity of the appropriations process and ensuring that funds are distributed as directed by Congress.

As you know, the withholding of billions in funding —investments that had been approved by this Congress and signed into law by President Trump just a few months ago — was deeply harmful to the tens of thousands of schools and districts across the country that had budgeted and relied upon these funds to support students. Funding for these previously withheld programs provide essential resources for schools, students, and families, such as the hiring and training of high-quality educators, improving English language instruction, expanding access to STEM and early literacy programming, and more. As a result of this illegal withholding, states, districts, and schools were facing painful and unacceptable decisions, such as laying off educators, suspending educational programming, eliminating access to critical student support systems, and more.

While we are relieved that schools and districts will now be able to use these funds as planned, the threat of future cuts or disruptions remains a serious concern. The President's proposed Fiscal Year 2026 education budget slashes \$12.4 billion from the Department of Education, a devastating 15.6% reduction that would leave funding lower than it was 15 years ago. We are also deeply concerned about a potential "rescissions package" that would further cut education funds and other ongoing attempts to illegally withhold congressionally approved funding. As such, we are grateful for your work, as Chairwoman of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee, to advance a strong bipartisan bill for Fiscal Year 2026 that does not include these harmful cuts.

As the Fiscal Year 2026 appropriations process continues, we urge you to use your leadership role in Congress to rightfully determine funding levels, ensure stability for our schools and districts, and to advocate for students across your state and the country.

Thank you again for your leadership.

Sincerely,

AACTE

All4Ed

American Association of University Women

American Atheists

Black Educator Advocates Network

California AfterSchool Network

Californian for Justice

Center for Educational Assessment, University of Massachusetts Amherst

Children's Defense Fund

Committee for Children

Diverse Charter Schools Coalition

EdTrust

Education Leaders of Color (EdLoC)

Educators for Excellence

Horizon Education Centers

InnovateEDU

National Center for Learning Disabilities

National Charter Collaborative

National Parents Union

Parents for Public Schools

Ryan Research

SchoolHouse Connection

Students Engaged in Advancing Texas (SEAT)

The Center for Learner Equity

UnidosUS