



www.nsba.org  
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July 12, 2016

The Honorable Harold Rogers  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

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

RE: *Fiscal Year 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill*

**Office of Advocacy**

**Miranda A. Beard**  
President

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Lowey:

**Thomas J. Gentzel**  
Executive Director

On behalf of the 90,000 school board members who serve the nation's 50 million students in our local school districts, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) acknowledges the FY2017 appropriations bill reported by the Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Services, Education and Related Agencies. The legislation would provide targeted increases to Title I grants for disadvantaged students, special education and other key education programs in the next fiscal year. We appreciate your bipartisan support for these investments that are critical to our school districts providing a well-rounded curriculum for our students that helps prepare them for success in life.

**Lucy Gettman**  
Deputy Associate Executive  
Director

NSBA supports the Every Students Succeeds Act (ESSA) and is now working to ensure effective implementation of this reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). However, the improvements made in reauthorizing such legislation will not be as effective without the federal investments needed to ensure student achievement and the overall success of our schools. This appropriations bill would provide more than a \$450 million increase for Title I grants that will help address shortfalls in funding to districts as state education agencies designate resources for school improvement.

This legislation would also provide a \$500 million increase to special education grants under the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) – a priority that will benefit the more than 6.6 million students educated under IDEA. For decades, our school districts and communities have redirected funding from other education programs to address shortfalls in federal funding for this priority. Hence, the Subcommittee mark will help sustain this investment.

Additionally, the bill would provide \$1 billion for ESSA Title IV Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants that will help improve learning environments and access to technology for our students.

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As this legislation moves forward, we acknowledge the provisions to ensure that funding is not withheld from districts regarding guidance issued by the Departments of Education and Justice on May 13, 2016, as well as those regarding the U.S. Department of Labor's rule published May 23, 2016, regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act on "Defining and Delimiting the Exemptions for Executive, Administrative, Professional, Outside Sales and Computer Employees."

Thank you for your leadership and for supporting investments that help our districts equip our students with the 21<sup>st</sup> Century knowledge and skills needed for both college and careers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Thomas J. Gentzel". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized initial "T".

Thomas J. Gentzel  
Executive Director