



National School Boards Association
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February 25, 2019

The Honorable Robert C. “Bobby” Scott
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: *Rebuild America’s Schools Act of 2019 – H.R. 865*

Dear Chairman Scott and Ranking Member Foxx:

On behalf of our state school boards associations and the more than 90,000 local school board members who govern our nation’s 14,000 public school districts across the nation, the National School Boards Association (NSBA) appreciates your leadership to address the infrastructure needs of our nation’s public schools. The *Rebuild America’s Schools Act* would provide the investments needed by many of our school districts for 21st Century educational facilities that support the range of priorities for our students and communities. From classrooms with modern broadband connections to state-of-the-art science laboratories and energy efficient green building design, the legislation would help address these educational needs and support long-term goals for sustainability.

Schools across our country face challenges associated with infrastructure; existing buildings are inadequate and outdated. National estimates have placed total school facility needs, including technology, at well over \$500 billion, which is beyond the capacity of many communities and states to address. Hence, the *Rebuild America’s Schools Act* would prioritize grants for schools in underserved communities; reestablish school infrastructure bond programs, including the reinstatement of Qualified Zone Academy Bonds; promote green building design; increase federal infrastructure investments for districts educating students through the Impact Aid program; and, strengthen federal support for high-speed broadband services sufficient for digital learning. Each of these provisions would benefit millions of students in our nation’s public schools, helping close achievement gaps, raise student achievement, and advance equity in education.

However, the *Rebuild America’s Schools Act* includes the application of certain labor standards to projects financed with certain tax-favored bonds. NSBA opposes the inclusion of such provisions and urges the Committee to uphold the right of school boards to pursue the most efficient and cost-effective means of delivering education and related services, including contracts with outside providers.


The leading advocate for public education

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Furthermore, NSBA strongly supports the right of local school boards to retain all necessary decision-making authority when contracting with private companies in the operation of public schools. Therefore, we urge an exemption of these provisions.

NSBA appreciates your leadership to increase federal resources for the capital improvements our public schools need in order to provide the educational services critical to the success of our students. The *Rebuild America's Schools Act* would address many priorities for safe and healthy learning environments that facilitate interactive classroom instruction, build capacity for experiential learning and skills development, engage our students and communities as cornerstones for civic participation, and promote efficiencies within school district operating budgets.

We look forward to working with you and your staff to address NSBA's concerns with the bill.

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 and Chief Executive Officer