LETTER (Email from stakeholders to members of Congress)

Dear \_\_\_\_,

I am writing as a constituent, as an educator, and as a leader in my community to strongly urge you to oppose deep federal education spending cuts and, instead, to support continued federal investments in professional learning programs. Specifically, I request your support for a $210 million increase for Title II, Part A of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) in fiscal year 2024 appropriations.

I am deeply alarmed by provisions in the House-approved Limit, Save, Grow Act that could lead to cuts in key federal education programs of as much as 22%. Additionally, this bill could limit significant investments in federal education spending for the next nine years. This could leave federal education spending below last year’s funding levels until 2033. I fear that such severe spending reductions and strict future funding limits would cause immediate and long-term harm to our schools’ efforts to combat learning loss and stem the persistent teacher shortage, issues that the COVID-19 pandemic exacerbated.

I am particularly concerned about the impact of these proposals on professional learning. The flagship professional learning program at the US Department of Education is Title II, Part A, a formula grant program that provides critical funding to states and school districts to prepare, train, recruit, and retain high-quality educators. Rigorous professional development supported through Title II-A is needed for academic recovery, teacher retention, and meeting the needs of all students. Slashing funding to this program in fiscal year 2024 and starving it of increases for years to come could lead to lay-offs, and hinder school efforts to address widening achievement gaps and persistent educator shortages.

Rather than reduce funding for Title II-A, and thus hamstring its effectiveness, I urge you to consider supporting a $210 million increase in the forthcoming FY2024 Labor HHS Education Appropriations bill. Title II-A has received limited funding increases over the past few years that have not come close to keeping pace with inflation and still leave it short of its highest authorized funding level. With all that our schools are facing, now is the time to invest in our educators, not limit their professional opportunities.

Thank you for your consideration and for your support of our nation's educators and students.

Sincerely,

[name]