

Representative Robert Aderholdt
Chair, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 2, 2025

Dear Chair Aderholdt and Ranking Member DeLauro,

On behalf of AASA, The School Superintendents Association, representing more than 10,000 public school system leaders across the country, I write to express our deep disappointment with, and opposition to, the Fiscal Year 2026 House Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittee bill.

The bill's \$12 billion (15%) cut to the Department of Education—achieved through program eliminations, rescissions of already-enacted funds, and a \$5.2 billion (27%) reduction to Title I—represents an unprecedented disinvestment in our nation's schools and students. In inflation-adjusted terms, this proposal would fund education at levels nearly \$32 billion below what Congress enacted in 2011. Put more succinctly, this proposal provides less funding per pupil for this year's graduating class—the 2026 seniors—than it provided when they were in kindergarten.

We acknowledge that, unlike the President's budget, the House bill does not consolidate K-12 programs into a block grant or eliminate as many higher education programs. However, the House proposal inflicts harm in different ways:

- It cuts Title I by \$5.2 billion (27 percent). This includes \$938 million in advance funding school districts were planning to use when they become available on October 1 and a proposed \$3.7 billion cut to the Title I state grant (in addition to a rescission of \$938 million).
- It eliminates crucial formula programs that districts rely on, including Title II-A (educator professional development), Title III (English Language Acquisition), Adult Education State Grants, and Migrant Education programs.
- It slashes the Department's capacity to serve students by cutting program management by 30% and the Office for Civil Rights by 35%.

While the bill provides slight increases to IDEA (+\$26 million), Career and Technical Education (+\$25 million), and Title IV-A (+\$5 million), these amounts are negligible compared to the magnitude of reductions elsewhere. Charter schools, which see a \$60 million increase, cannot replace the

federal government's core commitment to ensuring every public school student—especially those in high-poverty, rural, or historically underserved communities—has access to the resources they need.

The Senate's bipartisan FY26 bill demonstrates that it is possible to preserve critical investments in education while honoring fiscal responsibility. By contrast, the House bill chooses austerity at the expense of equity, stripping away resources that support evidence-based reading instruction, educator development, English-language learners, afterschool programming, and family-supportive services like Full-Service Community Schools.

Federal investment in education has always been a bipartisan commitment to America's future. Title I and IDEA are not optional—they are the foundation of our nation's promise that a child's zip code should not determine their educational opportunity. The House bill, however, abandons that promise.

We urge the Subcommittee to oppose these damaging cuts and revise the proposal, working toward a bipartisan appropriations package that invests in children, protects public education, and strengthens the long-term health of our economy and democracy. AASA and our members stand ready to partner with you to achieve that outcome.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Noelle Ellerson Ng". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Noelle Ellerson Ng
AASA, The School Superintendents Association

CC: House LHHS Subcommittee