

September 24, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House of Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader of the House of
Representatives
United States Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of Chiefs for Change, a bipartisan network of more than two dozen state and district education Chiefs dedicated to excellence and equity for all students, I am writing in strong support of H.R. 6157, which combines the Fiscal Year (FY) 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (LHHS) appropriations bill with the FY 2019 Defense spending bill and a continuing resolution. This bill provides critical funding for schools, teachers, and students across the nation to address needs ranging from special education to supporting disadvantaged children, school reform, college access and more.

In particular, we are pleased to see that the bill includes \$440 million for the Charter School Program (CSP), which marks the highest-ever funding level in the program's more than 20-year history. In addition, it provides significant increases for important Chiefs for Change priorities, including the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program for research on evidence-based education programs; the Title IV-A Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) block grant to support school technology, school-based mental health services, and other needs; Title I and IDEA to serve, respectively, disadvantaged students and children with disabilities; the Career and Technical Education program to help students transition from high school to college and careers; and Pell Grants, which are crucial to helping our low-income students afford college. We are also pleased to see that Title II, which helps ensure that educators have the skills needed to improve student achievement, particularly in high-need schools and subject areas, is level-funded despite efforts to repeal this program over the past several years.

Chiefs for Change members work on the front lines of education, and we believe we must own and redouble our commitment to ensuring that students graduate from high school with rigorous college- and career-ready skills. This funding bill is vital to our efforts to meet this goal. We urge Congress to pass H.R. 6157 in order to fund so many of the programs that have been instrumental in boosting achievement in our school systems. Please contact us if we can be of any assistance.

Sincerely,

Mike Magee, CEO

CC: Representative Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Chair, House Committee on Appropriations
Representative Nita Lowey, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations
Representative Tom Cole, Chair, House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee
Representative Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee