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March 9, 2022

U.S. Congress
Washington, DC

Dear Senator/Representative:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE YES on the Consolidated Appropriations Act for FY2022. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's report card for the 117th Congress.

We are particularly pleased that the bill begins to address the chronic underfunding of programs serving the students most in need. Specifically, it provides:

- \$1 billion more for Title I, the biggest increase in a decade
- \$448 million more for the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act
- \$45 million more for Full-Service Community Schools to more than double current funding, the biggest increase in the program's history
- \$61 million more for Career, Technical and Adult Education
- \$96 million more for Minority-Serving Institutions that includes a \$34 million increase for Hispanic Serving Institutions, a \$25 million increase for Historically Black Colleges and Universities, and a \$7 million increase for Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities
- \$7 million more for the Teacher Quality Partnerships that fund residency programs
- \$400 more for the maximum Pell Grant, the biggest increase in a decade
- \$558 million more for early childhood education programs that includes a \$289 million increase for Head Start and a \$254 million increase for the Child Care and Development Block Grant
- \$1.8 billion more for Child Nutrition Programs that includes \$45 million for the Summer Electronic Benefit Program and \$30 million for equipment to help schools serve healthy meals
- \$26 million more for the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program to support the Thrifty Food Plan and provide emergency allotments to address the pandemic

We also welcome the long overdue extension of the Violence Against Women Act. We are happy to see that it enhances and expands services for survivors of domestic violence—including those in rural communities and LGBTQ survivors—but are disappointed that it does not address the boyfriend loophole.

We are also disappointed that the bill does not extend the U.S. Department of Agriculture's nationwide waiver for federal nutrition programs, reportedly due to partisan politics. The waiver allows schools to serve free, healthy meals to all students and provides flexibility to deal with supply chain issues and other pandemic-related challenges. Now, families already reeling from rapidly rising food and gasoline prices will have to pay for school meals as well.

Overall, however, the bill is a good start toward undoing the damage done by budget controls that severely constricted education funding for a decade—ongoing programs receive \$7 billion less than they did a decade ago in inflation-adjusted terms. Please VOTE YES on this vitally important bill.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association