

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2020

The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy.

Thank you for your steadfast commitment to fighting extreme poverty and supporting education for children in need around the world. We are writing to urge you to fully support Basic Education in the fiscal year 2021 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, including funding for U.S. Government international education programs, the Global Partnership for Education, and Education Cannot Wait.

We've made remarkable progress toward the goal of education for all. Since 2000, the total number of out-of-school children and youth has dropped by over 117 million, and global primary school enrollment has grown to 91 percent. However, we have more work to do. Globally 258 million children and youth are out of school, and nearly 40 percent of primary school age children are not acquiring basic literacy and numeracy skills. In conflicts and crises, these numbers are even higher. Nearly one in four children living in areas affected by conflict are missing out on their education. Far too often, hardships such as poverty, displacement, disability, and discrimination inhibit children's ability to access a quality education.

U.S. bilateral basic education programs increase equitable access to education, provide children with foundational reading, math, social and emotional skills, and prepare youth for successful careers. With the support of your Subcommittee in 2019, USAID's basic education programs reached over 42 million children and youth in more than 50 countries. Funding to expand basic education programs to vulnerable populations and address gaps in education service delivery will further strengthen education systems around the world and yield additional societal benefits for our partner countries, including improved health, economic growth, poverty alleviation, and participatory democracy.

U.S. support for multilateral partnerships, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), complements our bilateral programs and leverages additional resources for this important work. In 2019, GPE had 74 financially active grants in 49 countries totaling approximately \$2.2 billion, thereby enabling 48.4 million textbooks to be distributed, 465,346 teachers to be trained, and 4,115 classrooms to be built or rehabilitated. U.S.

investment in ECW has helped provide more than 2.3 million children, youth, and teachers in 30 crisis-affected countries with a quality education and training opportunities. Continued support for ECW will ensure that resources are available to provide some 8 million children and youth in conflict and crisis settings with access to education by 2021.

American support for these education programs in developing nations will help build the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators, strengthen important ties with countries around the globe, and promote our common interest in building a more stable, prosperous and equitable world.

Sincerely,

/s/ Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

/s/ Tina Smith
United States Senator

/s/ Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

/s/ Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

/s/ Tim Kaine
United States Senator

/s/ Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

/s/ Sherrod Brown
United States Senator

/s/ Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

/s/ Edward J. Markey
United States Senator

/s/ Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

/s/ Ron Wyden
United States Senator

/s/ Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

/s/ Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

/s/ Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

/s/ Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

/s/ Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator

/s/ Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator

/s/ Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

/s/ Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

/s/ Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator

/s/ Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator

/s/ Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator

/s/ Jack Reed
United States Senator

/s/ Robert Menendez
United States Senator

/s/ Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

/s/ Cory A. Booker
United States Senator

/s/ Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator

/s/ Bernard Sanders
United States Senator