

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 17, 2010

The Honorable Nita Lowey,
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
Room HB-26, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger,
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations
and Related Programs
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Granger:

We are writing to express our sincere appreciation for your longstanding leadership in providing funding for basic education programs, and we urge you to continue that support in the fiscal year 2011 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

As you know, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) recently estimated that the international community faces a \$16 billion funding gap to meet the internationally agreed upon goal of Education for All by 2015. Because of this shortfall, there are currently 72 million out of school children and 759 million adults around the world who lack basic literacy and numeracy skills – effectively condemning them, and their families, to a life of poverty.

Improving the well-being of the world's poor is not only a humanitarian and moral imperative, it also serves our own interests by lifting up nations and widening opportunities for trade and commerce. Education, which is foundational to economic growth, is therefore now more important than ever, as the world struggles to emerge from the global economic downturn.

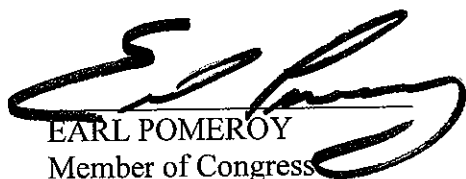
A significant U.S. investment in international basic education also directly enhances our national security. In war-torn regions and fragile states, education enables children to make reasoned decisions about their lives and futures, and offers a path away from despair and hopelessness. In fact, research has shown that each year of education reduces the risk of conflict by around 20 percent, roughly the same stabilizing effect as a 5 percent annual economic growth rate.

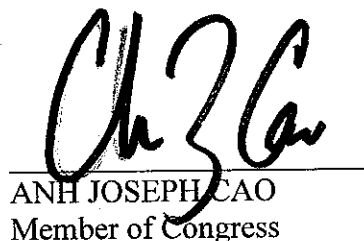
Perhaps most importantly, education actually saves lives. Education has been shown to lower child and maternal mortality rates, increase life expectancy, and significantly decrease vulnerability to AIDS and other deadly diseases. It also facilitates an understanding of, and ability to practice, basic elements of health, sanitation and child care.

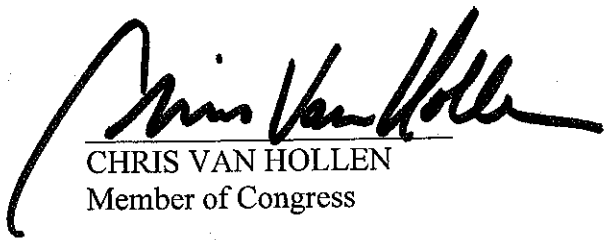
For these reasons, we strongly urge your Subcommittee to provide the maximum possible funding for basic education in the fiscal year 2011 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill.

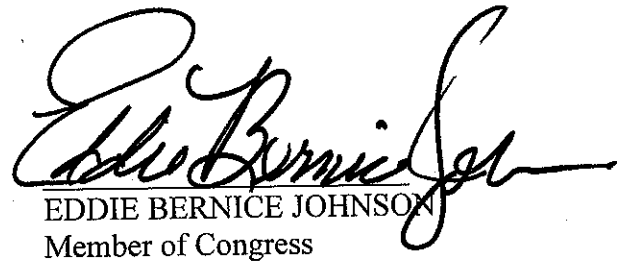
We appreciate your consideration of our request.

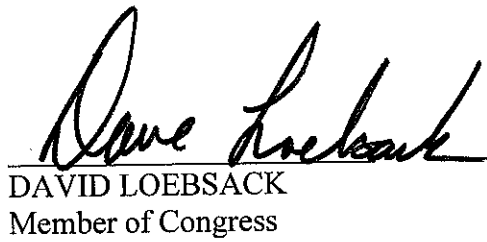
Sincerely,

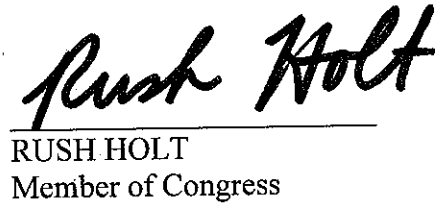

EARL POMEROY
Member of Congress


ANH JOSEPH CAO
Member of Congress

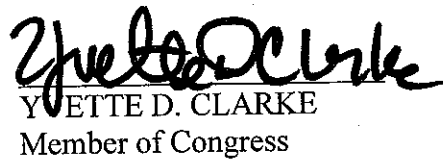

CHRIS VAN HOLLEN
Member of Congress

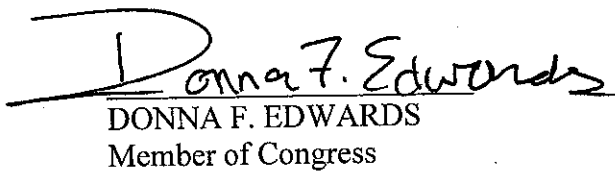

EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON
Member of Congress

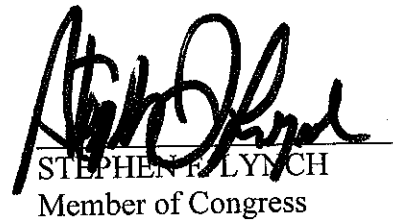

DAVID LOEBSACK
Member of Congress

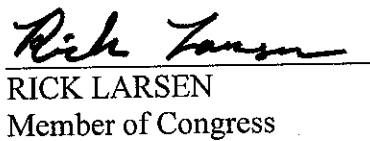

RUSH HOLT
Member of Congress

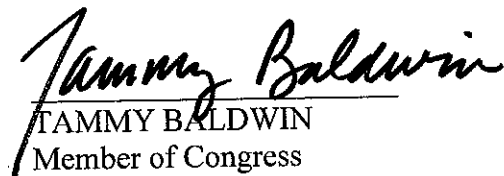

JIM MCDERMOTT
Member of Congress


YVETTE D. CLARKE
Member of Congress

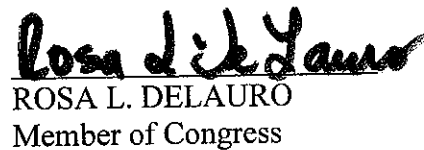

DONNA F. EDWARDS
Member of Congress

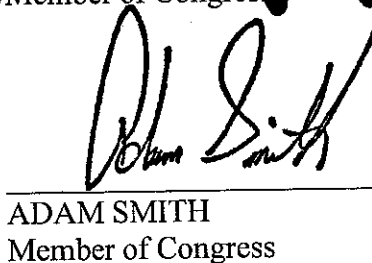

STEPHEN F. LYNCH
Member of Congress

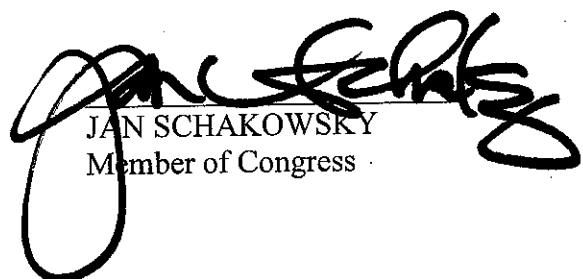

RICK LARSEN
Member of Congress

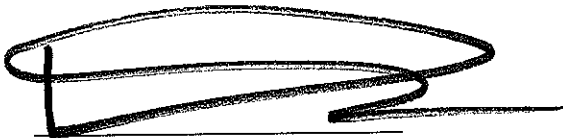

TAMMY BALDWIN
Member of Congress


JOHN CONYERS JR.
Member of Congress


ROSA L. DELAURO
Member of Congress


ADAM SMITH
Member of Congress


JAN SCHAKOWSKY
Member of Congress



DAVID WU
Member of Congress



CHAKA FATTAH
Member of Congress



EARL BLUMENAUER
Member of Congress



LYNN WOOLSEY
Member of Congress



JAMES P. MORAN
Member of Congress



HENRY A. WAXMAN
Member of Congress