Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 16, 2025

The Honorable Linda E. McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Ave., SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

The Honorable Russell Vought
Director
Office of Management and Budget
Executive Office of the President
725 17th Street NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Secretary McMahon and Director Vought:

As Members of the California Congressional Delegation, we write to express deep concerns regarding the Department of Education's illegal and reckless decision to withhold nearly $7 billion in funding for K-12 schools and adult education, including $928 million for California.[1] With the start of the new school year approaching, on June 30, 2025, States were just given one day's notice that the funds would be indefinitely frozen past their typical release on July 1. This freeze leaves our communities scrambling and is already forcing schools in California and across America to roll back programs, lay off staff, and cut services for our students. Releasing these funds, which support critical education programs and services for millions of students, is required by law. We call on you to immediately reverse your illegal decision and distribute the funding to States.

These funds make up more than 10% of federal investments in K-12 schools in most states.[2] With nearly 5.8 million K-12 students in California, the illegal freezing of these Congressionally appropriated funds is already hurting our schools and students, impacting the planning, operation, and funding for programs that support:

- Reducing class sizes; recruiting and retaining teachers, including in underserved areas; and improving the effectiveness of teachers, principals, and other school leaders through the Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants program (Title II, Part A);
- Quality, local after-school, before-school, and summer learning for students, particularly those in underserved communities, through the Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers program (Title IV, Part B);
- Local community efforts to improve students' academic performance, such as accelerated learning courses, school-based mental health services, STEM education, and college and career counseling, through the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Program (Title IV, Part A);
- English language learners in learning and gaining proficiency in English through the English Language Acquisition program (Title III, Part A);
- Education for children of migrant and seasonal farmworkers who do the hard work to ensure Americans have food on their tables, through the Migrant Education program (Title I, Part C); and
- Providing adults and out-of-school youth with the basic skills, like reading, math, and problem-solving, needed to be productive workers, family members, and citizens, through the Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants.

[1] https://democrats-appropriations.house.gov/news/press-releases/president-trump-illegally-steals-public-schools-across-country
[2] https://learningpolicyinstitute.org/blog/states-face-uncertainty-k-12-funding-remains-unreleased

These programs support some of the most vulnerable and underserved students and communities in California and have been demonstrated to have lifelong benefits to students' educational attainment, income, and other measures of wellbeing. Each passing day that these funds are unlawfully withheld hurts our schools and students and strains already limited budgets. In California alone, the Trump Administration's funding freeze is affecting hundreds of thousands of students and educators. For many of California's school districts, this funding had already been accounted for in school budgets for the upcoming school year. Now, our schools are being forced to delay hiring and reduce resources to help students. Rather than being able to work towards and plan for a successful learning environment for our students, each day that goes by means schools are forced to consider rolling back the programs mentioned above, lay off teachers, and cut back essential services.

We demand that the Department of Education and the Trump Administration stop holding K-12 student funding hostage and release the nearly $7 billion in funding meant to help our students, teachers, and families, including the $928 million being unlawfully withheld from California. This illegal freeze in funding is setting our students and schools up for failure. Our teachers, families, and children deserve better than the Trump Administration's reckless upheaval and chaos.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. Given the imminent start of the next school year, we request a prompt response no later than July 21, 2025.

Sincerely,

Norma J. Torres
Member of Congress

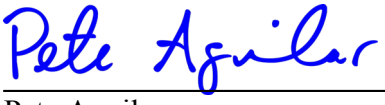
Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress
Chair, California Democratic Congressional Delegation

Derek T. Tran
Member of Congress

Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress

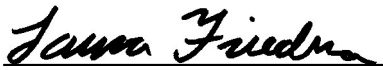
Alex Padilla
United States Senator

Adam B. Schiff
United States Senator



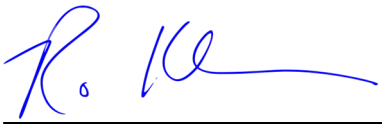
Pete Aguilar
Member of Congress

John Garamendi
Member of Congress



Laura Friedman
Member of Congress

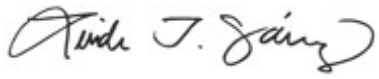
Dave Min
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress

Salud Carbajal
Member of Congress

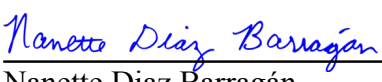
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz, M.D.
Member of Congress

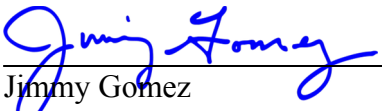
Lateefah Simon
Member of Congress



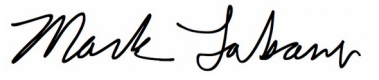
Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress

Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

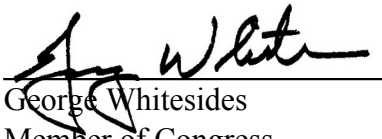


Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



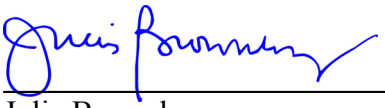
Mark Takano
Member of Congress

Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



George Whitesides
Member of Congress

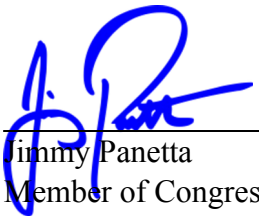
Scott H. Peters
Member of Congress



Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

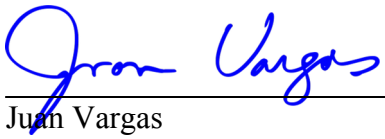
Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress

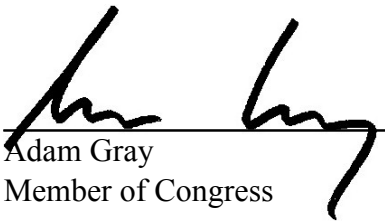


Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

Mike Levin
Member of Congress



Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

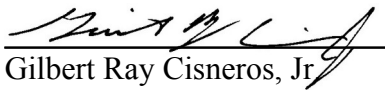


Adam Gray
Member of Congress

Luz M. Rivas
Member of Congress

Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

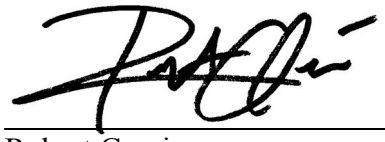
Jared Huffman
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress

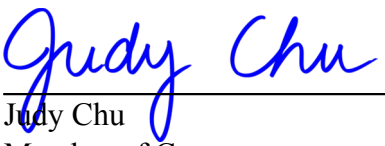
Kevin Mullin
Member of Congress

Sydney Kamlager-Dove
Member of Congress

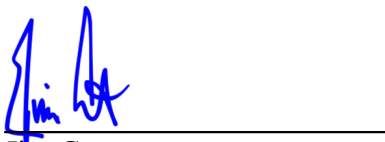


Robert Garcia
Member of Congress

Ami Bera, M.D.
Member of Congress



Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Jim Costa
Member of Congress

Josh Harder
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Nancy Pelosi
Member of Congress

Sam T. Liccardo
Member of Congress