

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 6, 2017

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services and Education
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human,
Services and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As you develop the fiscal year 2018 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act, we respectfully request that you fund the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFEC) grant program at its authorized level of \$10 million.

Over 40 years of research shows that family engagement is critical for student success. Supporting family engagement provides significant value to all parents, and particularly those who struggled in school or failed to graduate from high school themselves. Family engagement is an essential component of breaking that cycle for the next generation. Students whose families are involved in their children's academic success attend school more regularly, earn better grades, enroll in more challenging academic programs, and have higher graduation rates. The SFEC program will harness what we know to help schools and districts implement systematic family engagement programs that build ties between the community, families, and schools.

During the crafting of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), both the House and Senate recognized the vital role of parent and family engagement in education by maintaining the SFEC program (formerly known as the Parental Information and Resource Centers) as a standalone program in their respective bills. The improved SFEC program focuses on much needed technical assistance and partnership development for states and school districts to better support schools and educators to engage with families. Research is clear that this engagement will further the academic and developmental progress of our nation's children and drive increases in student achievement and other positive outcomes.

Investing in family engagement efforts is important to ensuring not only that families are meaningfully supported and engaged in the education of their children, but that our nation's students are fully prepared for higher education, workforce, and career opportunities in the 21st Century.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to support this important program.

Sincerely,



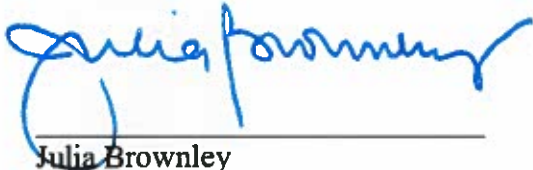
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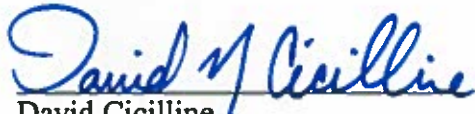
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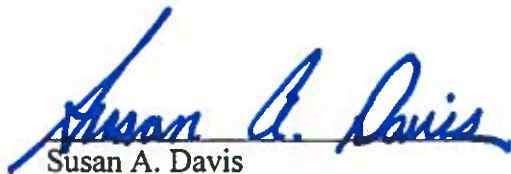
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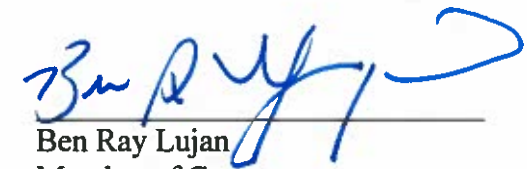
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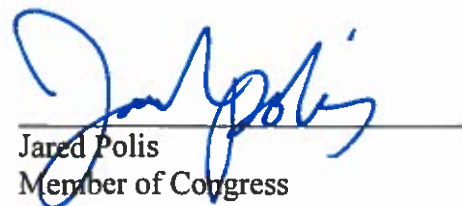
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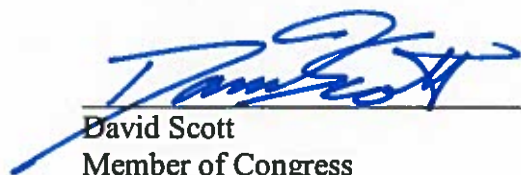
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