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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6025
<http://appropriations.senate.gov>

February 16, 2007

The Honorable Margaret Spellings
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Spellings:

Now that the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Joint Funding Resolution, H.J. Res. 20, has been signed into law, I strongly urge that you give very careful consideration to including support for the following projects and funding levels in the agency's funding plan to be submitted to the Committee, pursuant to Title I, Section 113:

- \$1.2 million for Huntington Junior College for the expansion of the captioning program. This funding would allow for the purchase of technology and equipment to expand the distance learning, internet-based component of the closed captioning program at Huntington Junior College. The expansion of the captioning program would enable West Virginians from throughout the state to enroll in the program, regardless of their location.
- \$1 million for the Kanawha County, West Virginia, school system to implement the Project GRAD program. The mission of Project GRAD is to ensure quality public education for all students in economically disadvantaged communities, and to increase high school graduation and college matriculation rates in designated GRAD schools. Project GRAD will give children from disadvantaged homes the opportunity to attend college by creating uniformity between schools and between the student's subject areas. If the student's family is forced to move due to economic situations, Project GRAD enables them to pick up where they left off in their previous school, maintaining their current course of education.
- \$900,000 for continuation of the Following the Leaders, Kanawha County, West Virginia, School System. This program is designed to help teachers implement the academic goals of No Child Left Behind and improve student achievement by

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providing technology based solutions for teachers to address a student's area of classroom deficiency. Following the Leaders tests a student's course knowledge to determine on which studies teachers need to place further emphasis. This program will enable the achievement of learning standards put in place by No Child Left Behind.

- \$100,000 for Clay and Roane County, West Virginia, School Systems for the continuation of the Following the Leaders program. This program is also designed to help teachers implement the academic goals of No Child Left Behind and improve student achievement by providing technology based solutions for teachers to address a student's area of classroom deficiency. Following the Leaders tests a student's course knowledge to determine on which studies teachers need to place further emphasis. This program will enable the achievement of learning standards put in place by No Child Left Behind.

- \$220,000 for expansion of the First Book program in West Virginia. First Book is a national program that distributes new books to children from low-income families across the country. The proposal would fund the distribution of 100,000 books in West Virginia, sign up one-hundred recipient groups to ensure ongoing sources of new books long after the grant is complete, strengthen First Book's three existing West Virginia Advisory Boards, and establish five additional boards in rural communities and in key cities such as Charleston and Huntington.

- \$121 million for the Teaching American History grant program. The Teaching American History program gives competitive grants to local education agencies to implement programs to improve the teaching of traditional American history as a separate subject. Countless studies have shown that students woefully lack the fundamental knowledge of American History. This grant program will help teachers adequately prepare and teach history lessons.

- \$41 million for the Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship Program. This is the only merit-based undergraduate student assistance program administered by the Department of Education that highlights quality education and rewards student achievement.

- \$33 million for the Alcohol Abuse Reduction program. The Alcohol Abuse Reduction program was authorized during Senate consideration of the No Child Left Behind Act, and allows high schools to implement alcohol prevention

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programs. With eleven million alcohol users between the ages of 12 and 20, this project is important as it includes one or more of the proven strategies for reducing underage alcohol abuse as determined by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). It is my hope that the Department of Education will continue to work with the Department of Health and Human Services on this important program.

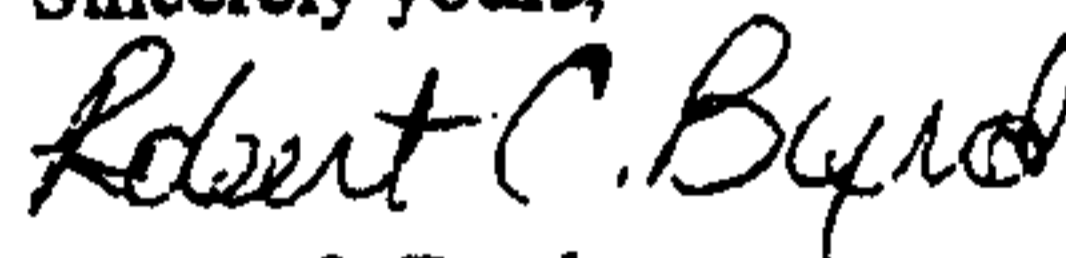
- \$850,000 for the National Recognition Awards Program. This Department of Education program, within the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools, provides funding to identify, further evaluate, and disseminate information about innovative alcohol and drug abuse prevention and education programs at the college level.

I would appreciate a follow-up report from you regarding these initiatives, including the level of funding each item may receive in FY 2007. If you decide to proceed with these important initiatives, please advise me of the milestone events leading to their full implementation.

Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact my Appropriations Staff Director, Mr. Terry Sauvain, at (202) 224-7200. I look forward to your prompt response.

With best wishes, I am

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Byrd

RCB:cbg



THE SECRETARY OF EDUCATION
WASHINGTON, DC 20202

March 30, 2007

Honorable Robert C. Byrd
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

Thank you for your letter of February 16 indicating support for funding various programs and projects under Public Law 110-5.

The Department's fiscal year 2007 operating plan, submitted to Congress as required by H.J.Res. 20, includes funding for the programs you mentioned. The Robert C. Byrd Honors Scholarship program is funded at \$40.6 million. The Teaching American History grant program is funded at \$119.8 million. The operating plan includes \$32.4 million for Alcohol Abuse Reduction and the Department intends to use \$841,500 to continue the Safe and Drug-Free Schools National Recognition program.

Your letter indicated support for specific projects under way at Huntington Junior College; in Kanawha, Clay, and Roane counties; and with the First Book program in West Virginia. While the Department does not intend to set aside funds for these specific projects, some or all of these projects may be eligible for funding under one of the Department's discretionary grant programs. Information on current grant competitions is available at our Web site (www.ed.gov) as is a forecast of funding opportunities for the coming year.

I hope this information is helpful.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Margaret Spellings".

Margaret Spellings