

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Ranking Member Tom Cole
House Appropriation Subcommittee on
Labor, HHS, Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As your Subcommittee considers Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations, we urge you to **maintain at least level funding for the Innovative Approaches to Literacy (IAL) grant program administered by the Department of Education**, authorized in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). IAL provides competitive awards to school libraries as well as national not-for-profit organizations, including partnerships that reach families outside of local education agencies (LEAs), to support children and families in high-need, underserved communities. By providing age-appropriate books, supporting parental engagement programs, and reinforcing professional development, the IAL program helps to support literacy skills to ensure that children enter school ready to learn and best positioned for success.

Since its inception in Fiscal Year 2012, 166 IAL grants have been awarded to national non-profit organizations and school districts across every region of the US. Some examples of IAL grant activities include:

Local Education Agencies-

- A recent award for the book distribution and literacy support program through the Texas Education Service Center, Region 20, will build student literacy skills for children birth through fifth grade. Region 20 received a 2018 IAL grant which will support teacher professional development, in-school library materials, and book distribution focusing on family engagement activities. Texas has a high percentage of its fourth graders that read below a proficient level. This IAL award will help create a model that schools across the state can use to improve their literacy proficiency ratings.

National Non-Profit Organizations-

- Reading Is Fundamental (RIF) used IAL funds to support 33,000 students across 31 schools districts with books and literacy resources to explore a model that drives summer reading outcomes by supporting students, teachers and families. Fifty-seven percent of

the students involved in the study showed gains in reading proficiency over the summer. RIF was also part of an IAL project with the Kentucky Education Development Corporation to support participating schools through access to books, resources and training resulting in improved student performance in literacy

- Reach Out and Read (ROR) and Save the Children partnered to engage schools, families and the pediatric primary care providers in creating literacy-rich environments for more than 40,000 children in rural areas of Arizona, Colorado, Kentucky and South Carolina. Several school districts in Texas (Southwest, Charlotte, Cuero, Brownsville ISDs) and Oklahoma (Idabel) have incorporated the Reach Out and Read model in recent IAL projects to integrate pediatric providers in literacy promotion activities. By partnering with the healthcare professionals, communities are able to reach children during the earliest years of life, ensuring that parents learn how reading, singing and rhyming help facilitate healthy brain development and language acquisition, starting at birth.


Access to high-quality literacy programming and resources remains a critical component of childhood literacy. For American families living in poverty and limited to the services of high-need local educational authorities, lack of access to quality reading materials and adequate learning facilities is prohibitive, fostering chronic disadvantages for already underserved youth. Without critical literacy support, students often fall behind in school and struggle to thrive in the workforce.


The 114th Congress took important steps in supporting the needs of disadvantaged students by providing IAL authorization through the passage of ESSA and funding through appropriations since 2012. From Alaska, to New York, and Kentucky to California, this important appropriation provides funding for initiatives that include book distribution, early literacy services, technological integration and support for literacy activities, professional development for educators, culturally responsive literacy workshops for parents/families, and effective school library programs.

We ask you to maintain, or increase, this investment in the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill.

Sincerely,


Eddie Bernice Johnson
Member of Congress


Don Young
Member of Congress


James P. McGovern
Member of Congress

Juan Vargas

Juan Vargas
Member of Congress

Gwen Moore

Gwen Moore
Member of Congress

Julia Brownley

Julia Brownley
Member of Congress

Adam Smith

Adam Smith
Member of Congress

Jerry McNerney

Jerry McNerney
Member of Congress

Albio Sires

Albio Sires
Member of Congress

Harley Rouda

Harley Rouda
Member of Congress

Nydia Velázquez

Nydia M. Velázquez
Member of Congress

Joyce Beatty

Joyce Beatty
Member of Congress

Carolyn B. Maloney

Carolyn B. Maloney
Member of Congress

Richard E. Neal

Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress

Gregory W. Meeks

Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress

Doris Matsui

Doris Matsui
Member of Congress

Ben Ray Luján

Ben Ray Luján
Member of Congress

Sean Patrick Maloney

Sean Patrick Maloney
Member of Congress

Joe Courtney

Joe Courtney
Member of Congress

Emanuel Cleaver

Emanuel Cleaver
Member of Congress

Raul Ruiz

Raul Ruiz
Member of Congress

Marcia L. Fudge

Marcia L. Fudge
Member of Congress

Daniel W. Lipinski

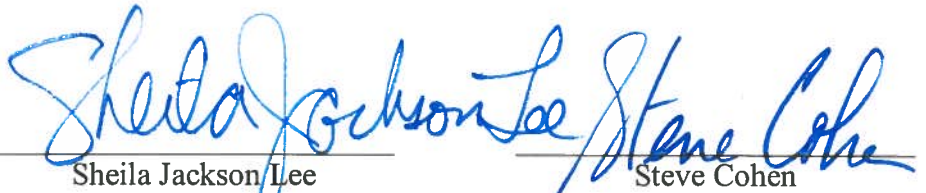
Daniel W. Lipinski
Member of Congress

Al Green

Al Green
Member of Congress



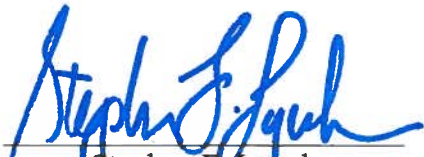
James R. Langevin
Member of Congress



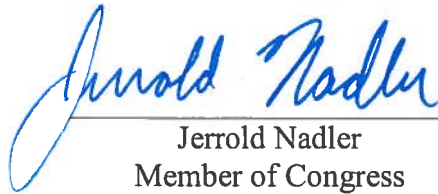
Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Diana DeGette
Member of Congress



Peter A. DeFazio
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



Chellie Pingree
Member of Congress



Brad Sherman
Member of Congress



Peter Welch
Member of Congress



Bobby L. Rush
Member of Congress



Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



Collin C. Peterson
Member of Congress



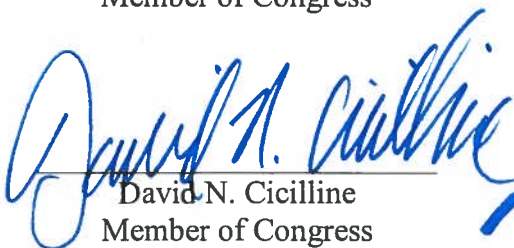
C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger
Member of Congress



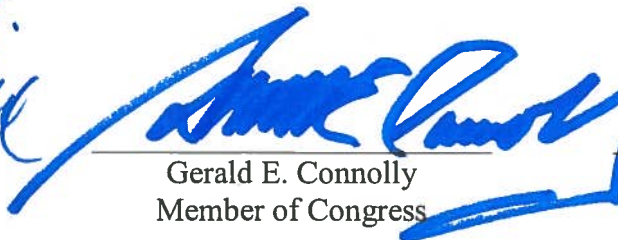
Anthony G. Brown
Member of Congress



Maxine Waters
Member of Congress




David N. Cicilline
Member of Congress



Gerald E. Connolly
Member of Congress



Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress




Marc A. Veasey
Member of Congress




William R. Keating
Member of Congress




Alcee L. Hastings
Member of Congress




John Garamendi
Member of Congress




Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



John P. Sarbanes
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress




Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Member of Congress



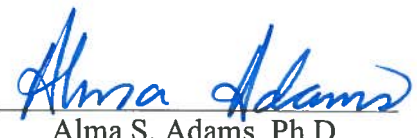
Robin L. Kelly
Member of Congress




Judy Chu
Member of Congress




Hakeem S. Jeffries
Member of Congress



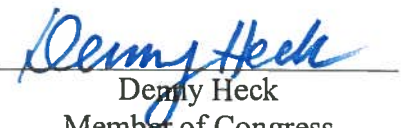
Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
Member of Congress



Tony Cárdenas
Member of Congress



Theodore E. Deutch
Member of Congress



Denny Heck
Member of Congress



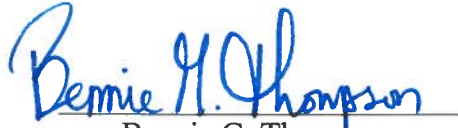
John Katko
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress




Jackie Speier
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Barbara Lee
Member of Congress



Stephanie N. Murphy
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



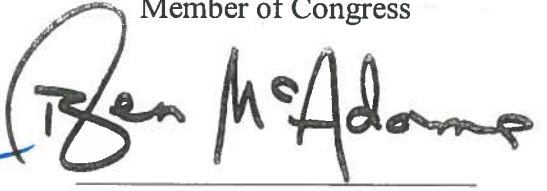
Debbie Dingell
Member of Congress



Abby Finkenauer
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Ben McAdams
Member of Congress



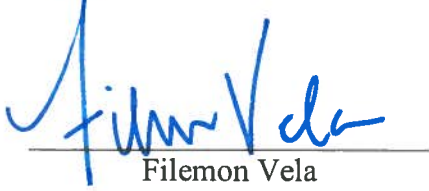
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Ro Khanna
Member of Congress



David Scott
Member of Congress



Filemon Vela
Member of Congress



A. Donald McEachin
Member of Congress



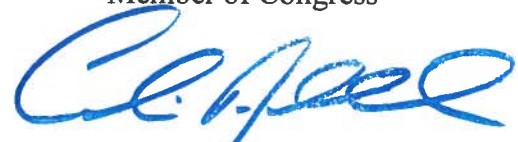
Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Chris Pappas
Member of Congress



Tom O'Halleran
Member of Congress



Colin Z. Allred
Member of Congress



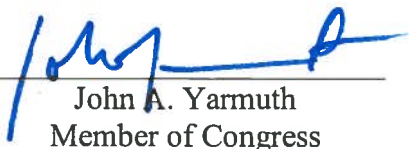
Anthony Brindisi
Member of Congress




Cynthia Axne
Member of Congress



Jeff Van Drew
Member of Congress



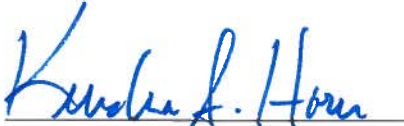
John A. Yarmuth
Member of Congress




Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress




Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress

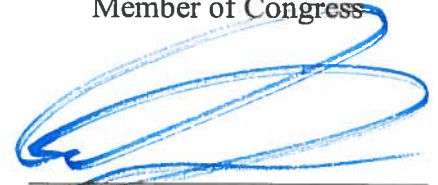

Kendra S. Horn
Member of Congress



Mark Takano
Member of Congress



Sean Casten
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaunter
Member of Congress



Cedric L. Richmond
Member of Congress



Antonio Delgado
Member of Congress

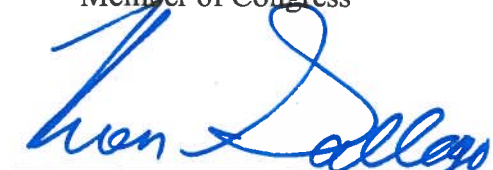

J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



Kim Schrier M.D.
Member of Congress



Seth Moulton
Member of Congress


Ruben Gallego
Member of Congress



Mikie Sherrill
Member of Congress

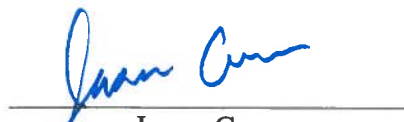

David Loeb sack
Member of Congress



Jennifer Wexton
Member of Congress


Jared E. Golden
Member of Congress

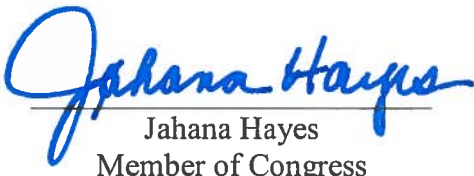

Conor Lamb
Member of Congress


James A. Himes
Member of Congress

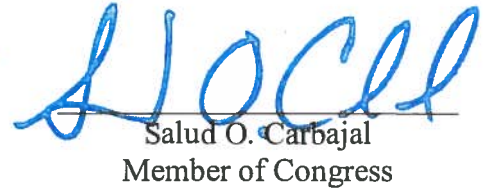

Jason Crow
Member of Congress

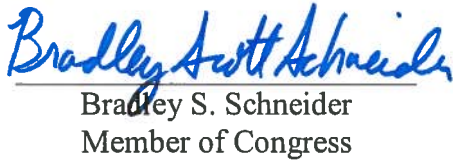

Steven Horsford
Member of Congress

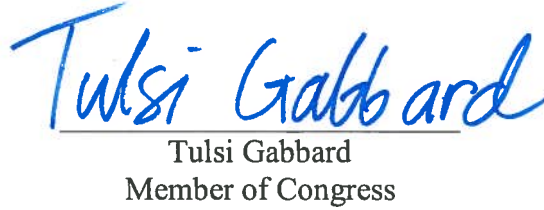

Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress


Jahana Hayes
Member of Congress

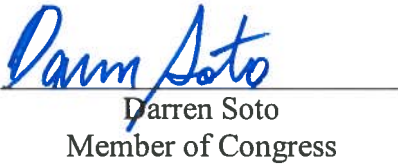

Lizzie Fletcher
Member of Congress

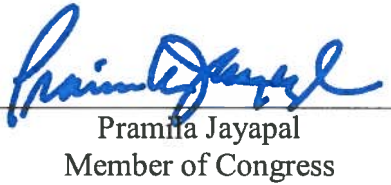

Salud O. Carbajal
Member of Congress

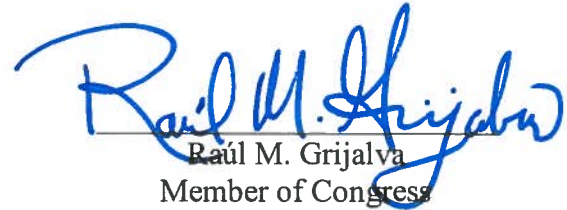

Bradley S. Schneider
Member of Congress

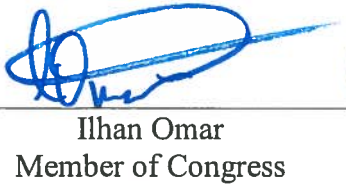

Tulsi Gabbard
Member of Congress


Ron Kind
Member of Congress


Darren Soto
Member of Congress


Pramila Jayapal
Member of Congress

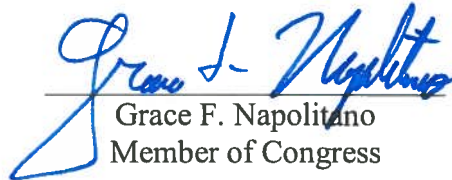

Raúl M. Grijalva
Member of Congress


Ilhan Omar
Member of Congress

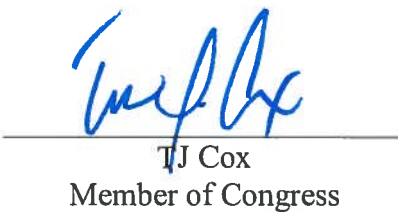

Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress


Elissa Slotkin
Member of Congress


Jennifer González-Colón
Member of Congress


Grace F. Napolitano
Member of Congress


Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress


TJ Cox
Member of Congress

Karin Bass

Member of Congress

AE

Member of Congress

Susie Lee

Member of Congress