

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September XX, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We are disappointed that during subcommittee consideration of the FY 2011 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations bill, funding for the Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act was eliminated. We believe this decision was a mistake and that funding for the Javits program should be restored to its FY 2010 level of \$7.5 million.

Javits is the only federal program dedicated to addressing the unique learning needs of gifted students. While this is a very small program by federal standards, this \$7.5 million in funding impacts thousands of students, teachers, and schools across the country. This program positively impacts the education of gifted and talented students in every state through the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented and through competitive research and capacity building grants, activities that states and school districts simply do not have the capacity to undertake on their own, especially during this time of fiscal unrest.

Our nation is failing to serve high-ability, low income students. The Javits program directly addresses this issue. It focuses on developing strategies to identify and serve students who traditionally have not had access to gifted education programs. Because of work done through the Javits program, teachers have been trained to better understand how to identify high ability in students and modify curriculum to meet their needs. If the Javits program is eliminated, this work will end.

Additionally, elimination of funding for the Javits program would result in closure of the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented, which would be a tremendous loss to classroom teachers and school leaders. The mission of the center is to develop best practices, which have been disseminated and implemented in schools across the nation.

We certainly understand the need to cut government spending and reduce the federal deficit. However, the Javits program has already seen its funding decrease over recent years, especially if one considers the increases in the cost of living. In FY 2002, the Javits program received \$11.25 million in funding. This level decreased to \$7.5 million by FY 2008 and has remained at this level since then. Restoring this funding to \$7.5 million will

not increase spending by \$1 from the previous year. While completely eliminating this funding would jeopardize gifted and talented programs throughout the U.S. while doing little to improve our budgetary situation.

Again, we request that funding for the Javits Gifted and Talented Program be restored to the FY 2010 level of \$7.5 million. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,