

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 16, 2012

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
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 Rosa DeLauro
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 Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We support a continued commitment to the nation's gifted and talented children. There is abundant evidence that the nation's high-ability students are not keeping pace academically with their peers across the world. In a global economy that depends on the availability of skilled and knowledgeable workers, our failure to develop the potential of high-ability students will have serious long term repercussions for our economy and our national competitiveness.

Too often, advanced ability goes unrecognized, especially for children from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. As a result, many of these bright students fail to maximize their academic and intellectual potential, and their performance on state tests and other benchmarks has languished. Indeed, there has been an increasing "excellence gap" between the performance of top students from minority and low-income backgrounds compared to their more advantaged peers. At current rates of achievement, it will take decades to close some of these gaps.

Gifted and talented students have unique learning needs that require specialized instruction. Gifted students do not achieve top levels of performance or remain high performing on their own. They need to be stimulated and challenged and their intellectual talent must be developed through rigorous curriculum delivered by teachers trained to identify and support talent.

In order for teachers to be able to recognize and fully develop the gifts and talents of the high-ability learners in their classroom, they must first be provided with the tools to identify and meet the unique learning needs of these students. There is a tremendous need for further research in this area.

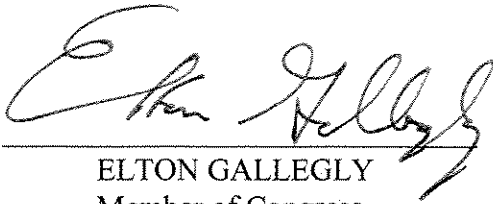
As such, we continue to support the Jacob Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act. If restoring funding for this program in the Fiscal Year 2013 Labor, HHS, and Education Appropriations Bill is not possible, we urge the subcommittee to at least provide the following legislative language directing the Institute for Education Sciences to continue the research and development activities that had been funded under the Javits Act specifically aimed at meeting

the learning needs of disadvantaged and other underrepresented gifted and talented students:

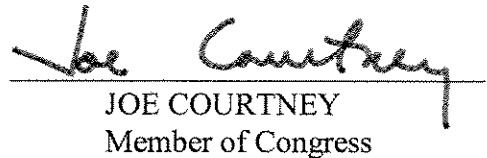
Within the funds made available under this heading, the IES shall support research and development that directly supports learning and improves the academic achievement of gifted and talented students, including those who may not be formally identified as gifted and those who are from underrepresented populations, ensure dissemination of the results of all such research supported by federal funds; continue support for a National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented; and ensure that gifted and talented education is included in national reports produced by IES.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

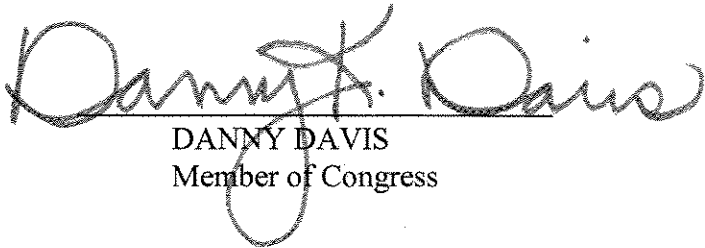
Sincerely,



ELTON GALLEGLY
Member of Congress



JOE COURTNEY
Member of Congress



DANNY DAVIS
Member of Congress