

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
Washington, D.C. 20515

April 24, 2018

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
Chairwoman  
House Committee on Education and the Workforce  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
Chairman  
House Committee on Armed Services  
2121 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx and Chairman Thornberry:

We write to express our strong opposition to the inclusion of H.R. 5199, the Education Savings Accounts for Military Families, or any school voucher or privatization amendment, in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA). Specifically, we write to express our deep concern with any dilution of funding from the Impact Aid program, a program with a strong history of bipartisan support that was reauthorized in 2015 by an overwhelming majority as part of the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA made amendments to and reauthorized our nation's K-12 education law, the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA).

The NDAA reauthorization is a critical piece of legislation that must pass on a bipartisan basis every year. The inclusion of any proposal that would send public resources to private schools is opposed by the Democratic caucus and could potentially derail any NDAA bill that contains such measure.

During the lead-up to ESEA reauthorization, the House Education and the Workforce Committee held 69 hearings over the course of eight years to debate every aspect of the law. Over those years, no one in either chamber suggested that Impact Aid should be privatized. In fact, during the open amendment process in the Senate, not a single amendment was filed or voted on that would fundamentally alter the structure of Impact Aid. It is unfathomable that now, as ESSA is being implemented, you and your colleagues would be open to a major redistribution of Impact Aid dollars, a redistribution that would strip funding from 1,200 school districts and 10 million students. As you are aware, 80% of our military-connected students attend public schools. Any amendment that diverts resources from public schools would be detrimental to the majority of military-connected students. Furthermore, privatizing impact aid would violate the statutory purpose of the program: to reimburse school districts for the loss of local tax revenue in communities where there is a federal impaction.

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
The Honorable Mac Thornberry  
April 24, 2018  
Page 2

One noticeable improvement for military-connected children included in ESSA was the disaggregation of student data by a new subgroup of military-connected children. This policy change was requested by military-families and other service member stakeholders who were actively engaged in the multi-year-long ESEA reauthorization process. At no point did military families ask for Impact Aid dollars to flow to private schools. Furthermore, other voucher proposals offered during ESSA consideration were soundly rejected.

Rather than dismantling this bipartisan program, Congress should work to fully implement ESSA, monitor the educational achievement of military-connected students through the new subgroup data in ESSA, support the implementation of the Military Interstate Children's Compact Commission, and focus on the supports military families need, such as addressing TRICARE, providing opportunities for spousal employment, and ensuring transitional benefits.

Sincerely,



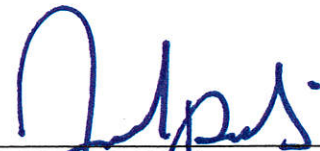
---

**ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT**  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Education and the Workforce



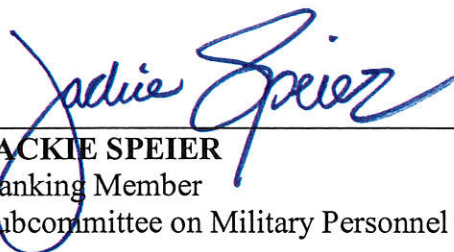
---

**ADAM SMITH**  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Armed Services



---

**JARED POLIS**  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Early Childhood,  
Elementary, and Secondary Education



---

**JACKIE SPEIER**  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Personnel



---

**GREGORIO KILILI CAMACHO SABLAN**  
Member of Congress



---

**MADELEINE Z. BORDALLO**  
Member of Congress



---

**RAUL M. GRIJALVA**  
Member of Congress



---

**JOE COURTNEY**  
Member of Congress

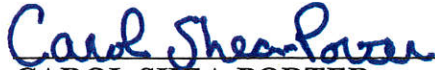




**MARK TAKANO**  
Member of Congress



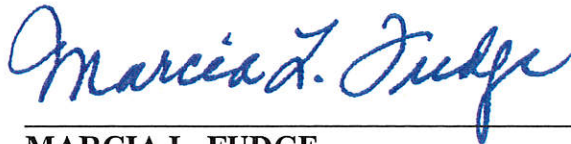
**A. DONALD MCEACHIN**  
Member of Congress



**CAROL SHEA-PORTER**  
Member of Congress



**SUZANNE BONAMICI**  
Member of Congress



**MARCIA L. FUDGE**  
Member of Congress



**SALUD O. CARBAJAL**  
Member of Congress



**RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY**  
Member of Congress



**SUSAN A. DAVIS**  
Member of Congress



**DONALD NORCROSS**  
Member of Congress



**MARK DESAULNIER**  
Member of Congress



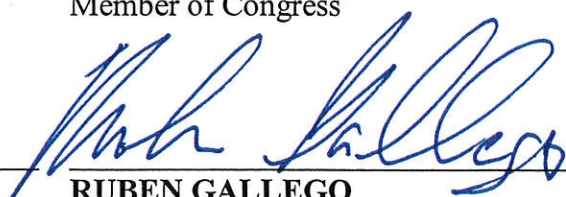
**RICK LARSEN**  
Member of Congress



**ADRIANO ESPAILLAT**  
Member of Congress



**COLLEEN HANABUSA**  
Member of Congress



**RUBEN GALLEGO**  
Member of Congress



---

**TOM O'HALLERAN**  
Member of Congress



---

**LISA BLUNT ROCHESTER**  
Member of Congress



---

**ALMA S. ADAMS**  
Member of Congress



---

**ROBERT A. BRADY**  
Member of Congress



---

**TULSI GABBARD**  
Member of Congress



---

**JAMES R. LANGEVIN**  
Member of Congress



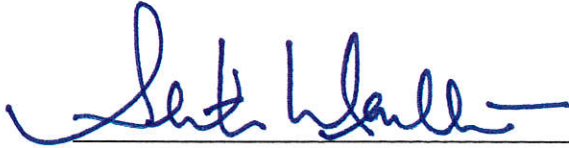
---

**JOHN GARAMENDI**  
Member of Congress



---

**ANTHONY G. BROWN**  
Member of Congress



---

**SETH MOULTON**  
Member of Congress



---

**FREDERICA S. WILSON**  
Member of Congress



---

**JIMMY PANETTA**  
Member of Congress



---

**NIKI TSONGAS**  
Member of Congress



---

**RO KHANNA**  
Member of Congress



---

**BETO O'ROURKE**  
Member of Congress



---

**THOMAS R. SUOZZI**  
Member of Congress



---

**MARC VEASEY**  
Member of Congress



---

**JIM COOPER**  
Member of Congress



---

**JACKY ROSEN**  
Member of Congress



---

**STEPHANIE N. MURPHY**  
Member of Congress