

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 14, 2014

Chairman Patrick Leahy  
Subcommittee on State  
And Foreign Operations  
437 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 201510

Ranking Member Lindsey Graham  
Subcommittee on State  
And Foreign Operations  
290 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 201510

Dear Chairman Leahy and Ranking Member Graham,

We respectfully request that you provide strong funding for international basic education programs in the Fiscal Year 2015 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. Through basic education, we can help alleviate poverty, build markets for U.S. exports, and enhance global stability and security.

Improving the education of the world's poor is critical to breaking the cycle of poverty and strengthening communities. It is a humanitarian and moral imperative that transforms individuals, families, and whole nations. In fact, mounting evidence shows that educating girls is one of the most cost-effective ways to spur development and create a ripple effect throughout society.

Education also provides a safe space for children in fragile countries, allowing them an opportunity to better their communities and resist harmful ideologies. Without an education these children are marginalized, without hope for gainful employment and at risk for human trafficking and recruitment as child soldiers.

Through education programs, we can not only empower children intellectually and economically, but also directly improve their health and safety. In many countries, the school is the center of the community and can serve an important role in facilitating health and food programs. Quality education has been shown to lower child mortality rates and significantly decrease vulnerability to HIV/AIDS and other deadly diseases.

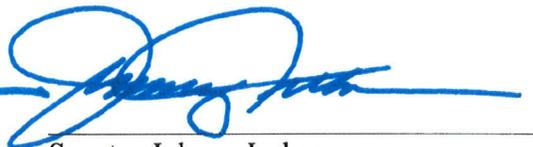
For these reasons, we urge your Subcommittee to strongly support international basic education programs in the Fiscal Year 2015 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



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Senator Dianne Feinstein



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Senator Johnny Isakson



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Senator Jeanne Shaheen



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Senator Debbie Stabenow



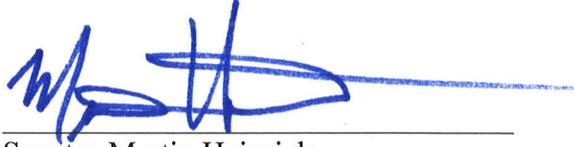
Senator Benjamin Cardin



Senator Bernie Sanders



Senator Barbara Boxer



Senator Martin Heinrich



Senator Kirsten Gillibrand