

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 27, 2015

The Honorable Lindsey Graham  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on State and  
Foreign Operations  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on State and  
Foreign Operations  
Senate Committee on Appropriations  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Graham and Ranking Member Leahy,

We are writing to urge you to strongly support international basic education programs in the FY 2016 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. Through robust funding of basic education, we can help reduce poverty through economic growth, build markets for U.S. exports, enhance stability and security, and promote effective development across sectors.

Improving the education of the world's poor is critical to breaking the cycle of poverty and violence and strengthening communities. Education equips millions with the tools needed to forge a path to self-sufficiency and better lives. Mounting evidence shows that educating girls is one of the most cost-effective ways to spur economic development and create a ripple effect throughout society. In addition, education programs not only teach children but also help improve their health and safety.

But education is increasingly under attack by extremists who feel threatened by the power of education. Recent attacks by Boko Haram in Nigeria and the Taliban in Pakistan are shocking examples of this fear. We must stand with children like Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani girl who defied the Taliban and risked her life demanding the right to an education. Through quality basic education, we can support safe learning opportunities for children in conflict and crisis situations, helping all children fulfill their potential and have the chance at a better life. Through these education programs, we can continue to work with communities to restore access to schools, reintegrate child soldiers and refugees, and provide life skills training to youth.

The United States government is not tackling these problems alone, and investments in basic education strengthen the collective response of the

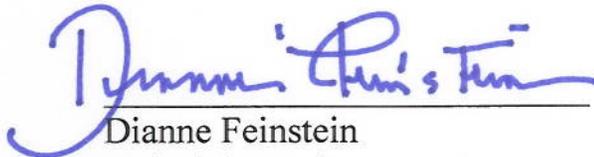
international community. By focusing on clear goals in strong bilateral and multilateral programs at USAID and the Global Partnership for Education, including literacy and access to education for children in areas of conflict and crises, the U.S. can ensure that scarce federal dollars are being used effectively to make sure more children are in school and learning.

We value the lasting impact made by basic education programs and urge your Subcommittee to strongly support international basic education in the fiscal year 2016 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. We appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Johnny Isakson  
United States Senator



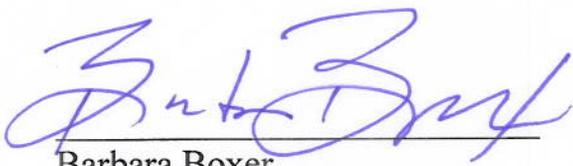
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United States Senator



Lamar Alexander  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Barbara Boxer  
United States Senator



Ben Cardin  
United States Senator



Dick Durbin  
United States Senator

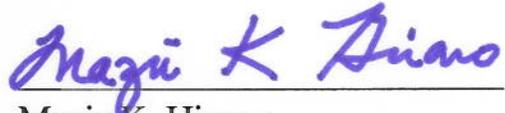


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United States Senator



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Martin Heinrich  
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Bernard Sanders  
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Chuck Schumer  
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Jeanne Shaheen  
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Debbie Stabenow  
United States Senator