March 23, 2017

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee
Subcommittee
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations LHHS Subcommittee
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro,

As you continue consideration of fiscal year 2017 funding levels and begin to develop and mark up the fiscal year 2018 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, we are writing to urge you to include $120 million in funding for the bipartisan Education Innovation and Research (EIR) Grants Program, which drives outcomes for students and families by spurring innovation, rewarding results, and catalyzing public-private partnerships.

We believe EIR drives substantial and lasting improvements in student achievement by supporting the development, validation, and scale-up of successful innovations at the state and local levels. The program uses a tiered-evidence approach, which means that the more evidence of success a program has, the more funding it receives. This enables scaling of the most effective education interventions while also supporting innovative new ideas at lower levels of funding as evidence of success is being proven. In addition, the EIR program generates private investments in the form of matching funds and in-kind donations. All EIR programs are rigorously evaluated, ensuring that we continue to learn more about what works in education and what doesn’t, so that schools and their partners can continue to improve.

We believe EIR is particularly important given the emphasis of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) on policies and practices that are informed by evidence. By providing flexible funding for a broad range of community-driven projects and allowing states, school districts, nonprofits, and businesses to partner together to develop and grow innovative programs, projects funded by EIR will fulfill Congress’ intent to contribute to the production of actionable, proven interventions in a given community or population and generate an evidence base that can be adapted to inform practices and funding decisions for states and school districts across the country.

Funding for education innovation is imperative in addressing our nation’s most pressing education challenges and we strongly encourage you to fund EIR at $120 million in Fiscal Years 2017 and 2018 to ensure that every student, regardless of whatever his or her background may be, receives a first-class education. If FY17 funding levels are finalized as a continuing resolution, please include language directing the U.S. Department of Education to implement the EIR program, as newly authorized under ESSA.
We recognize the many difficult choices both the Subcommittee and full Committee face and thank you for your ongoing support for social innovation policies. We look forward to working with you to advance this important issue in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Member of the America Forward Coalition (full list below)
America Forward Coalition

Acelero Learning/Shine Early Learning
Consideration Alliance
America’s Promise Alliance
ANet
AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation
AVANCE
Bard Early Colleges
BELL
Beyond 12
Bottom Line
BUILD
Citizen Schools
City Year
College Advising Corps
College Forward
College Possible
College Summit
Compass Working Capital
Connecticut Center for Social Innovation
Corporation for Supportive Housing
Educators 4 Excellence
Enterprise Community Partners
Eye to Eye
Family Independence Initiative (FII)
Fuse Corps
Generation Citizen
Genesys Works
Global Citizen Year
GreenLight Fund
iMentor
Institute for Child Success
Jumpstart
JVS
KIPP
LIFT
LISC
Match Education
National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS)
National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)
New Classrooms Innovation Partners
New Leaders
New Teacher Center
Nonprofit Finance Fund (NFF)
Opportunity Nation
Peace First
Peer Health Exchange
PowerMyLearning
Public Allies
Reading Partners
REDF
Roca
Root Cause
Save the Children
Schools That Can
Service Year Alliance
Single Stop
Social Enterprise Alliance
Social Finance US
Teach For America
The Children’s Aid Society
The Corps Network
Third Sector Capital Partners
Turnaround for Children
Twin Cities Rise!
uAspire
Urban Teachers
UVA Pay For Success Lab
Year Up
YouthBuild USA
Youth Villages
10,000 Degrees