

April 3, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon:

On March 28, 2025, you notified the Commonwealth of Massachusetts that the Department of Education (“the Department”) would take back \$106 million in funding already disbursed to school districts across the state for K-12 education. This claw back is part of a nationwide Department effort to wrest from 41 states over \$2 billion in funding intended to support students. We are alarmed at this abrupt termination of congressionally authorized and appropriated funding for education in Massachusetts and astonished at the callous disregard for the wellbeing of students, educators, and communities.

Congress authorized this funding as part of the *American Rescue Plan Act*,¹ and Massachusetts has continuously distributed it to local school districts. The Trump administration advised Massachusetts that *American Rescue Plan Act* funding would remain available until March 2026.² As of last week, school districts across the Commonwealth expected to receive these funds, to the tune of \$106 million.³ Relying on the expectation set by the Trump administration, school districts and schools developed their budgets and made spending decisions.⁴ For example, the New Bedford school district allocated funds for a school-based health center.⁵ Some school districts were anticipating using the funding for mental health supports, security, air quality improvement, and math tutoring.⁶

Instead, many school districts will now lose millions of dollars.⁷ New Bedford faces more than \$15 million in losses. Springfield could lose more than \$47 million. Although the Department represented that it would instead consider making funding available to states on an “individual project-specific basis,” that pathway would create additional red tape by requiring school districts to invest time and resources to request funding that the Trump administration promised would remain available.⁸ The Administration’s reneging on its funding promise is both harmful and incredibly frustrating to students, families, educators, and school district leaders, especially considering that the funding the Administration is now pulling back may be used to fuel billionaire tax cuts at the expense of students.

¹American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, Pub. L. No. 117-2, 50 Stat. 664, 134 Stat. 414 (2021).

²Press Release, Governor Maura Healey and Lt. Governor Kim Driscoll, Trump Administration Terminated \$106 Million in K-12 Education Funding for Massachusetts (Apr. 1, 2025), <https://www.mass.gov/news/trump-administration-terminates-106-million-in-k-12-education-funding-for-massachusetts>.

³*Id.*

⁴American Rescue Plan Act of 2021, *supra* note 1.

⁵Christopher Huffaker, *Trump administration cuts \$106 million in unspent COVID relief from Massachusetts schools*, Boston Globe (Apr. 1, 2025), <https://www.bostonglobe.com/2025/04/01/metro/trump-esser-massachusetts-pandemic/>.

⁶Press Release, *supra* note 2.

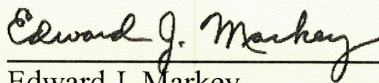
⁷*Id.*

⁸Brooke Schultz, *Linda McMahon Abruptly Tells States Their Time to Spend COVID Relief Has Passed*, Education Week, Education Week (Mar. 28, 2025), <https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/linda-mcmahon-abruptly-tells-states-their-time-to-spend-covid-relief-has-passed/2025/03>.

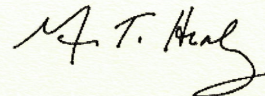
You previously testified before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee that you wish to “return education to the states” and that education “outcomes will improve if we can reduce compliance burdens on teachers and local schools.”⁹ In Massachusetts, local officials made the decisions about how to spend the funding at issue. Yet, rather than allowing local officials, educators, and school staff to focus their time and efforts on how to best put this money to work, its withdrawal will force schools back to the drawing board, requiring them to fight these cuts, rework their budgets, and scale back or eliminate projects intended to help students, educators, and communities.

The about-face on the continued availability of this essential funding is an insult to the hardworking educators, school staff, and public officials who are dedicated to providing students the best possible opportunities. Massachusetts gives students the best education in the country. We urge you to reverse course and allow leaders in the Commonwealth to deliver for students and communities without continued chaos and disruption.

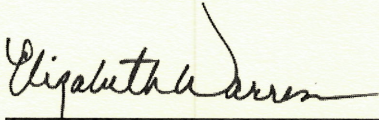
Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



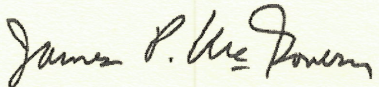
Maura T. Healey
Governor



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



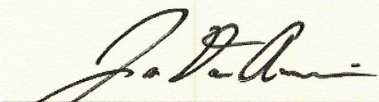
Richard E. Neal
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress

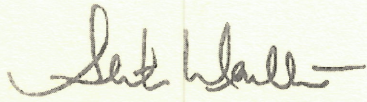


Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress

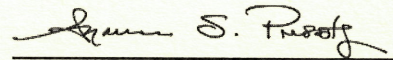


Katherine M. Clark
Member of Congress

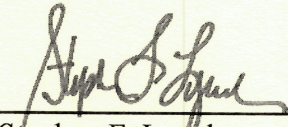
⁹ Answers to Questions for the Record on file with the office of Senator Edward J. Markey.



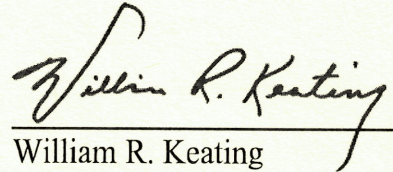
Seth Moulton
Member of Congress



Ayanna Pressley
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



William R. Keating
Member of Congress