

March X, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt  
Chairman  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin  
Chairwoman  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito  
Ranking Member  
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education, and  
Related Agencies  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chair Baldwin, and Ranking Member Capito:

We, the undersigned XX organizations, representing education associations, civil rights groups, policy advocates, researchers, and stakeholders, write to express our support for maintaining the U.S. Secretary of Education's authority to set aside 0.5 percent of funding from certain Higher Education Act (HEA) programs within the U.S. Department of Education (ED) to support rigorous evaluations and the collection and analysis of outcome data for HEA programs. This authority was included in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2022 and 2023 and we urge Congress to continue to maintain this important provision.

This set-aside authority increases ED's capacity to build evidence of effective practices to support the continuous improvement of HEA programs and ultimately improve students' postsecondary success. Historically, there have been insufficient financial resources and a lack of staff capacity to support rigorous evaluations of interventions funded by the HEA. In fact, just 197 higher education study reviews meet the What Works Clearinghouse standards, compared with 1,082 focused on K-12 education. Maintaining this set-aside authority in FY2024 will enable ED to advance long-term equity-focused, student-centered, and evidence-based policy and practice change by strengthening the evidence base on what interventions work, for whom, and under what circumstances in higher education. Additionally, maintaining the evaluation set-aside authority for the Secretary of Education supports parity across agencies, many of which have the authority to set-aside funds for the purpose of research and evaluation.

Thank you for considering this request to maintain the Secretary of Education's authority to set aside funds to support rigorous research and evaluations. If you have any questions, please contact Jessica Vivar, Government Affairs Associate ([jvivar@ihep.org](mailto:jvivar@ihep.org)).

Sincerely,

Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)