

Support FY22: International Basic Education Funding

Please join Senator Van Hollen (D-MD) in the call for robust funding for international basic education in Fiscal Year 2022.

If you any questions or would like to sign on, please contact Paul Warnke (Paul_Warnke@vanhollen.senate.gov).

****Deadline to sign on is May 14, 2021****

Senator Van Hollen invites colleagues to sign the below letter urging the SFOPS Subcommittee to provide full funding for the International Basic Education account in FY22. Funding for international education initiatives – including bilateral education programs, the Global Partnership for Education (GPE), and Education Cannot Wait (ECW) – promotes equitable access to education, increased school enrollment, and the provision of quality education to crisis-affected countries. With more than 700 million students around the world lacking internet access at home and prolonged school closures widening existing gaps in educational and economic attainment in low- and middle-income countries, these programs can play an indispensable role in addressing COVID-19’s impact on global education. Furthermore, American support for international education will strengthen our relationships with other countries and advance our common interest in building a more equitable and prosperous world.

FY21 cosigners: Duckworth, Smith, Shaheen, Cantwell, Kaine, Peters, Brown, Rosen, Markey, Cardin, Wyden, Stabenow, Blumenthal, Coons, Feinstein, Heinrich, Murphy, Klobuchar, Hassan, Hirono, Cortez Masto, Harris, Baldwin, Reed, Menendez, Sinema, Booker, Merkley, Sanders

LETTER TEXT

Dear Chairman Coons and Ranking Member Graham,

Thank you for your commitment to fighting extreme poverty and improving education for children in need around the world. We are writing to urge you to provide strong support for Basic Education in the fiscal year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill, including funding for U.S. Government international education programs, the Global Partnership for Education, and Education Cannot Wait.

Bolstering global education serves U.S. interests by building the next generation of leaders, entrepreneurs and innovators, strengthening important diplomatic and cultural ties with countries, and promoting our shared goal of building a more stable, prosperous and equitable world.

COVID-19 has disrupted the education of over 91 percent of the world's children and youth and severely exacerbated a pre-existing global learning crisis. Worldwide, 826 million students do not have a computer and 706 million students lack internet access at home. For children who have been deprived of access to school and distance learning during the pandemic, learning loss and other harms pose a generational threat that could widen existing gaps in educational and economic attainment in low- and middle-income countries. Research indicates that a three-month school closure could cost children over a year's worth of learning and, if left unaddressed, many children may never catch up.

U.S. Basic Education assistance strives to increase access to quality education, provide children with foundational reading, math, social and emotional skills, and prepare youth for successful careers. To recover from COVID-19 globally and prepare for future emergencies that could further disrupt education, U.S. foreign assistance will need to support improved access to distance learning materials and technology, safe school reopening plans, reenrollment initiatives for out-of-school children and youth, and curriculum and teaching adaptation to ensure that all students get back on track and reach their full potential.

U.S. support for multilateral partnerships, including the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) and Education Cannot Wait (ECW), complements our bilateral programs and leverages additional resources for this important work. During the COVID-19 pandemic, multilateral organizations have been quick to respond to the dire education needs of children. GPE has mobilized \$500 million to help developing countries mitigate both the immediate and long-term disruptions to education being caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. ECW activated \$140 million in 2020, including through its First Emergency Response fund, in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, which aims to reach 32 million children in 34 countries.

To sustain and enhance international efforts to support learning during and after COVID-19, it will be imperative for the Subcommittee to fully fund Basic Education in the Fiscal Year 2022 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations bill. We greatly appreciate your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,