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## Sample Letter for Federal Funding Request

(to be copied and emailed or used on district/COE letterhead)

**PICK ONE:**

|                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| The Honorable <b>FULL NAME</b> | The Honorable <b>FULL NAME</b> |
| United States Senate           | U.S. House of Representatives  |
| Washington, DC 20510           | Washington, DC 20515           |

Dear **Senator LAST NAME/Representative LAST NAME**,

I am a **teacher/parent/classified staff/administrator/community member** in the **NAME OF DISTRICT OR COUNTY OFFICE OF EDUCATION** and am writing today with grave concerns about public education funding in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. The crisis has forced schools across California, and the country, to physically close, yet they continue to deliver high-quality education and services to students under constantly changing and challenging circumstances. This abrupt shift to distance learning has forced local educational agencies already faced with budget deficits to provide significant support and tailor resources to students to ensure learning continues.

Public schools will need substantial funding in order to not only continue to support distance learning for all students and provide the support services and healthy meals they need to thrive, but to plan and prepare for the time when students can safely return to classrooms. LEAs have already poured a substantial amount of funding into distance learning as they attempt to provide devices and internet access for students in need.

Although the CARES Act provides \$13.5 billion to stabilize public school budgets, it does not include any dedicated funding for this critical need. Funding for internet access and the like is imperative, as studies have shown that students without home internet access have lower reading, math and science scores, a fact likely to be exacerbated during distance learning.

The passage of the proposed \$3 trillion federal Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, which would provide \$100.15 billion in total school funding — including about \$58 billion for K-12 in a state fiscal stabilization fund to be distributed based on the Title I funding formula — is imperative, but still insufficient for ensuring student success and safety during this time.

A May 12 letter to members of Congress from CSBA and other education partners advocated for, among other things, the authorization of an additional \$175 billion in federal relief funds for distribution to schools in 2020–21 and 2021–22, the creation of a \$13 billion Emergency Relief Fund to cover increased costs associated with

serving students with individualized education programs during the COVID-19 crisis, expanded E-Rate eligible services and an additional \$2 billion in E-Rate program funding. I strongly support this request.

Already, state and local budgets are quickly being drained of reserves through extreme upticks in unemployment rates and other economic impacts caused by COVID-19. As California schools are primarily funded through the state's budget, it is clear that any deficits in education spending will inevitably result in deficits to student learning — effecting not only their future prospects, but the country's economic and civic prospects. In fact, Gov. Gavin Newsom's May Budget Revision includes a \$19 billion reduction to education funding that will be devastating for our state's schools and to our efforts to reopen.

The \$31 billion in dedicated emergency funding for K-12 and higher education provided by the CARES Act falls far short of the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the Great Recession-era stimulus, which provided \$100 billion for education with investments in both state fiscal stabilization funds as well as public school categorical programs including Title I and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

It's time for the federal government to step up for public education as it did in 2009. The future success of the nation's public school students, and the U.S. itself, depend on it.

Sincerely,

Your name

Position/relationship and District name