

**Congress of the United States**  
Washington, DC 20515

April 20, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos  
Secretary of Education  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

As you and I have previously discussed, I write to continue to urge rapid, seamless disbursement of the remaining funding appropriated for the Education Stabilization Fund in the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act).

The resources provided in the CARES Act are critical for states, school districts, and institutions of higher education to respond to coronavirus and provide immediate relief and support to students. I appreciate the quick release of funding that has been provided to date and ask you and the Department of Education to take every possible step to rapidly disburse remaining funds for the purposes identified in the CARES Act. I urge the Department to make it clear that CARES Act funds, except those for emergency financial aid to students, may be used as reimbursement for costs and expenses incurred during the national emergency before the CARES Act was enacted, including lost revenue. Moreover, the Department should make it clear that an institution of higher education may issue grants to students to cover tuition, fees, and other charges owed by a student.

In recognition of the diverse, changing needs on the ground related to this national emergency, we provided significant flexibility for grantees. I expect the Department to allow states, school districts, and institutions of higher education to take advantage of this statutory flexibility as they respond to the national emergency over the coronavirus pandemic. Congress intended that these funds would be made available quickly and without burdensome application requirements or Secretarial priorities not included in the CARES Act, while ensuring transparency and protections for students and taxpayers. Though Congress is supportive of states and school districts that want to use CARES Act funding to address distance learning needs, it is one of many important activities, such as summer learning and afterschool programming. Congress did not prioritize one type of activity over another, and it is my view that the Department should not put its thumb on the scale either.

Working cooperatively on these and other issues to support the educational needs of states, schools, and students related to this national emergency is essential.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Rosa L. DeLauro". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "R".

Rosa L. DeLauro  
Chair  
Labor, Health and Human Services,  
Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee