

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 13, 2007

The Honorable Tom Harkin  
Chairman, Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, and Education  
Senate Appropriations Committee  
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building

The Honorable Arlen Specter  
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor  
Health and Human Services, and Education  
Senate Appropriations Committee

Dear Chairman Harkin and Ranking Member Specter:

We would like to express our support for funding for the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act. While a significant increase in funding for the Javits Act will be necessary for it to fully achieve its goal of expanding the availability of gifted and talented services to students in every state, we recognize current fiscal constraints. As a result, we are asking you to provide at least \$11.25 million for the Javits Act for fiscal year 2008. This is the level of support the program received in Fiscal Year 2002 before a series of across the board cuts, which have further undermined the ability of this program to make a difference for gifted and talented students nationwide.

In order for America to remain competitive globally, it is absolutely essential to challenge our best and brightest students to reach their full potential. The types of innovations and achievements that have historically given America a competitive edge occur only when we adequately support and encourage learning at an advanced level. Gifted and talented students represent enormous potential; letting that potential slip through the cracks jeopardizes our role as an economic and technological leader at a time when other countries place a high priority on advanced achievement.

The availability and quality of gifted and talented services for students varies widely between states and school districts. This establishes a real need for federal support, especially in the areas of research and dissemination of best practices. Although relatively small, the Javits Act positively impacts the education of gifted and talented students in every state in both these ways through the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented and through competitive research and capacity-building grants. Most importantly, the Act focuses on disadvantaged gifted students who often go unnoticed and unserved in gifted programs. Many of the gifted education curriculum and instructional strategies have shown promising results. We should do more, not less, to pursue these strategies.

Congress must continue its commitment to the goal of expanding access to educational services for gifted children nationwide so that *all* gifted and talented students are able to realize their full potential. Again, we ask that you provide \$11.25 million for the Javits Act for fiscal year 2008.

Thank you for your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,

Chuck Grassley

Chuck Schumer

Robert A. Menendez

Jon Sisk

Tom F. Kelly

Maxine Baucus

Blanche L. Lincoln

Erin Boyle

Chris Dodd

Jim Bunning

Norm Feingold

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Maria Cantwell

Mark Wyden

Susan Collins

Robert Menendez

Barbara Byer

Dick Dent

Rich Lugar

Shed Bums