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Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives

March 19, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen  
Chair  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey  
Ranking Member  
House Appropriations Committee  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chair  
House Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Ed  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
House Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Ed  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cole, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you begin work on the *Labor, Health and Human Services, Education Act for Fiscal Year 2019*, I urge you to include no less than \$5 billion to secure every K-12 school in the United States. Following the enactment of the Bipartisan Budget Act, we have a significant opportunity to better address the nation's most outstanding needs. I can think of no greater cause than guaranteeing the safety and well-being of our nation's children.

According to the latest data from the National Center for Education Statistics, less than 5 percent of public schools have random metal detector checks, while only 1.8 percent of public schools have daily metal detector checks. More than 6,000 public schools do not even have controlled access to school buildings, and only 7 percent of schools require student badges for entry. Local school districts need to have the means to implement these or other school security measures that work best for them, and money should not be a factor. Our nation's schools are woefully under-secured, and programs to increase school security are underfunded. We must fix that immediately.

As you know, schools receive the majority of funding through state and local taxes, and limited opportunities are available when local funding falls short. In the past, Congress has appropriated money to schools through the Matching Grants Program for School Security, which the House overwhelmingly voted to reauthorize through H.R. 4909, STOP School Violence Act. As a cosponsor of this bill, I support additional funding for this important program. However, H.R.

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4909 is only the first of many steps to secure our nation's schools. These institutions should not have to worry about money when it comes to providing security for kids, and they should not be forced to compete with other schools over resources that keep children safe.

Safety and security for our nation's children should be our easiest policy decision as lawmakers and it's time we update our school security strategies to adapt to these new threats. Students have the right to a safe school and we must act now, not later, to provide that security. I respectfully ask that you including the following language in this year's funding bill:

*“For increasing school security at elementary schools and secondary schools (as such terms are defined in section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801)), including through purchasing metal detectors and wands or hiring additional school security officers, no less than \$5,000,000,000, to remain available until December 31, 2019: Provided, That the Secretary of Education shall ensure that any elementary or secondary school may receive at least \$8,000.”*

For more information, please contact Sam Watters ([sam.watters@mail.house.gov](mailto:sam.watters@mail.house.gov)) in my office.

Sincerely,



Sean P. Duffy  
Member of Congress