



April 28, 2015

Representative Tom Cole
Chair, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2467 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Labor,
Health & Human Services,
Education and Related Agencies
Committee on Appropriations
2413 Rayburn House Office Bldg.
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the American Counseling Association (ACA), the country's largest and oldest counseling association; representing over 55,000 professional counselors, I am writing to you today to request that you provide \$50 million in funding in the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations bill for the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (ESSCP).

The ESSCP is the *only* authorized federal program devoted to creating and expanding counseling programs in schools. ESSCP allows schools to hire school counselors which ensure that students have access to services which support and promote optimal conditions for learning, improve school climate, improve school safety, and ultimately student learning.

The ESSCP also provides funds to school districts that demonstrate the greatest need for new or additional school counseling services, the greatest potential for replication or dissemination, or for programs that are the most innovative. The professional school counselor serves as a leader, an assertive advocate for students, consultant to families and educators, and team member to teachers, administrators and other school personnel to help each student succeed. Professional school counselors provide developmental, intervention, and remedial assistance through large and small group guidance and individual counseling activities, and crisis intervention to help all students.

The American Counseling Association is aware of the fiscal limitations facing Congress, however we urge you to recognize the cost-benefits of investing in this program. School counselors play a key role in helping students from all walks of life to develop professional and healthy attitudes in schools, which can pave the way for academic success. Such services are not only vital to underserved urban students but are even more important to students from rural areas, such as many western states and Native American reservations.



We strongly urge you to fund the ESSCP at the modest level of \$50 million dollars in order to sustain this small but very important program.

If you would like more information, please contact Guila Todd, Legislative Representative at gtodd@counseling.org. Thank you for your consideration and for your support of the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (ESSCP).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Yep".

Richard Yep, CAE, FASAE
Chief Executive Officer
The American Counseling Association