



May 5, 2020

The Honorable Robert Casey  
Member  
United States Senate  
Rm 393, Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

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Richard W. Askey, *President*  
Aaron F. Chapin, *Vice President*  
Jeffrey D. Ney, *Treasurer*  
James G. Vaughan, *Executive Director*

Dear Senator Casey:

As Pennsylvanians deal with the unprecedented challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic, I want to thank you for your support of legislation that has provided much-needed resources to Pennsylvanians. The federal response to this crisis has been helpful to businesses and workers who are facing economic hardships that none of us could have predicted even a few months ago.

However, it is now clear that this emergency will also have a devastating impact on school districts' finances. According to the Pennsylvania Association of School Business Officials, our state's school districts are projecting a local revenue loss of approximately \$1 billion for FY 2020-21.

These revenue shortfalls will affect every school district, regardless of size or geographic location. This means that, unless federal support becomes available, school districts across Pennsylvania will likely need to reduce staff, cut programs, and raise local taxes just to balance their budgets.

Considering this, the need for federal assistance to Pennsylvania's school districts is urgent. And I hope you will support an appropriation of at least \$175 billion for school districts and state and local governments across the nation.

As recently as 2011, Pennsylvania school districts dealt with the lasting effects of nearly \$1 billion in state cuts to public education. Then, we saw unprecedented staff cuts, the elimination of key education programs and resources like school librarians, art, music, and sports, and increases in class sizes. It has taken our schools years to recover from that crisis, and it is extremely important that we avoid another like it.

During the COVID-19 emergency, Pennsylvanians have been proud to see Congress step up and deal with the economic crisis that millions of us face. The federal support for businesses and displaced workers has been a much-needed stopgap against what could have been an economic catastrophe.

Now, I encourage you to pass legislation that supports school districts and the 1.7 million Pennsylvania students they serve every day. Federal funding for school districts and state

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and local governments will stave off the kinds of budget cuts that will leave our students without the resources they need to get the public education they deserve.

With your leadership, we know that Congress can provide this assistance. Without it, there is no doubt that our students will feel the consequences.

Please support legislation including at least \$175 billion in federal support to help school districts and state and local governments get through this crisis so that Pennsylvania's public schools can continue to provide all students with the education they deserve.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rich Askey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "R" and "A".

Rich Askey  
President