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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

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March 23, 2015

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ken Calvert
Chairman
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
B-308 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Betty McCollum
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment,
and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Rogers and Calvert and Ranking Members Lowey and McCollum:

As you begin the fiscal year (FY) 2016 appropriations process, I strongly urge the Committee to help address the deplorable conditions of schools maintained by the Bureau of Indian Education. Toward that end, I request the *FY 2016 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act* provide \$133.2 million for education construction within the Bureau of Indian Affairs. This would provide \$58.7 million more than is allocated in FY 2015 and match the President's recent budget request.

Significant health and safety hazards exist at American Indian education facilities across the country, including the Bug-O-Nay-Ge-Shig School of the Leech Lake Band of Ojibwe. The federal government has made a commitment to American Indian students and families to provide educational opportunities in a manner that preserves their culture, language, and traditions. Unfortunately, we are failing to meet that commitment. This request is one step Congress can take to begin moving the country in a new direction. However, more steps will be needed.

The Education and the Workforce Committee will also do its part to help address the education crisis facing American Indian students. In the coming weeks, the Committee plans to hold a hearing to further examine these issues and better understand what BIE is doing to address the situation occurring in schools under its jurisdiction. The Committee has already written to the

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BIE requesting information on its current policies. We will also continue to call on the BIE to publish a new list of project priorities, and I am grateful for your leadership in that effort.

With our nation facing significant budgetary challenges, it is more important than ever for Congress to set clear priorities. There is no question that many of these schools are not meeting the needs of their students, and it is time to do better. I look forward to working with you and other stakeholders to help all American Indian students receive an excellent education in a safe and healthy environment. Thank you for your consideration of this request and continued commitment to this effort. I stand ready to work with you in this invaluable endeavor.

Sincerely,



JOHN KLINE

Chairman

Committee on Education and the Workforce