

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 19, 2007

Dear Colleague,

We would like to invite you to join us in signing a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee in support of Gifted and Talented Education. Additional funding is needed for the Javits Gifted and Talented Students Education Act in order to directly benefit gifted and talented programs in your state, and throughout the nation.

The Javits program is the only source of federal funds currently focused on helping meet the unique learning needs of gifted and talented students. If America is to retain its competitive edge internationally, these promising students must be challenged and supported to reach their full potential so they can go on to pursue advanced degrees and make the technological innovations that drive our economy.

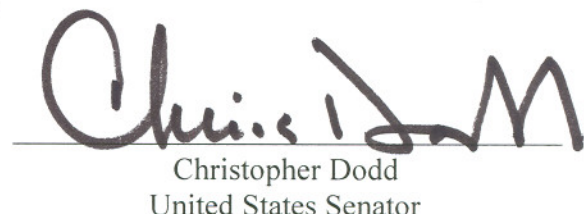
It is important to note that what makes a child gifted and talented is not whether the child receives good grades but *how* he or she learns. Gifted children actually look at the world differently. As a result, they have different educational needs than other students. Currently, thousands of gifted and talented children do not receive the educational programs and services they need to live up to their potential. In fact, many gifted and talented children lose interest in school and as a result, are achieving at below grade level expectations. By some estimates, up to 20% abandon their education altogether and drop out of school. This is a loss not just for that child, but for our country and our future economic prosperity.

The Javits Act supports the National Research Center on the Gifted and Talented and a system of grants that focus on identifying and meeting the needs of gifted students from disadvantaged backgrounds, and then disseminating that valuable information to educators nationwide. It also provides critical funding to help states expand their capacity to provide gifted and talented learners with the services they need to realize their full potential.

Unfortunately, the already limited funding for the Javits program has been reduced in recent years through across the board cuts. Restoring these funds is a vital first step toward helping all states meet the needs of gifted students. Attached, please find a copy of a letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Labor, HHS, Education Appropriations Subcommittee requesting restored funding at the FY 2002 level. If you wish to co-sign the letter, please contact James Rice with Senator Grassley at 4-3744 or Mary Ellen McGuire with Senator Dodd at 4-2823 by April 11.

Sincerely,

  
Charles E. Grassley  
United States Senator

  
Christopher Dodd  
United States Senator

# 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.