

Date

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Obey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
H-218 Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Lewis and Ranking Member Obey:

As you prepare appropriations legislation for the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education for Fiscal Year 2006, I strongly urge you to provide \$75 million for the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program in the Department of Education.

The Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program (ESSCP) is intended to provide schools with the necessary resources to establish and enhance school counseling programs. ESSCP allows school counselors, school psychologists, school social workers, child and adolescent psychiatrists, and other qualified psychologists to work together to establish a comprehensive counseling program that supports students by addressing barriers to academic success.

The need for counseling services at both the elementary and secondary school levels is clear. Counseling professionals are at the forefront of efforts to help students cope with school violence and heightened threats of terrorism, as well as the ongoing mental health effects that such events may have on students. Additionally, counseling professionals guide students in academic, social and emotional, and career development, so that they will achieve success and be prepared for fulfilling lives as responsible members of society. Students' academic achievement is the cornerstone of the *No Child Left Behind Act*, and the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program is an important component in our efforts to improve students' achievement.

Under the *No Child Left Behind Act*, Congress expanded the Elementary School Counseling Program to include secondary school activities. However, funds cannot be used for secondary programs until the statutory funding trigger of \$40 million is met. The current funding level is \$33.8 million. An appropriation of \$75 million for the ESSCP would support secondary school programs at a similar level to what was provided for elementary schools in Fiscal Years 2004 and 2005.

We must fulfill our commitment to ensuring students' success and well being by sufficiently funding the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

7

SAMPLE CONSTITUENT LETTER

Date

The Honorable (Full Name of Senator)
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator (Last Name):

As a psychologist and constituent, I urge you to support **S. 625, the Local Law Enforcement Enhancement Act of 2001 (LLEEA)**. The need to counter discrimination and violence in this country has become all the more urgent with the increase of hate crimes since the tragic events of September 11th.

LLEEA would strengthen our nation's response to hate crimes by expanding federal jurisdiction over hate crimes and by providing federal assistance to state and local law enforcement. Currently, hate crimes can only be prosecuted at the federal level when motivated by bias based on race, religion, national origin, or color and when the victim is engaged in a federally protected activity (e.g., voting) and in several other circumstances specified by statute. Hence, hate crimes often go unrecognized and unprosecuted. S. 625 would enable the federal government to address those cases that other jurisdictions are either unable or unwilling to investigate and prosecute, while retaining primary responsibility for hate crime prosecution at the state and local level. In addition, S. 625 would expand current law to recognize crimes motivated by a person's gender, sexual orientation, or disability. Hate crimes committed against these groups are forms of discrimination. The federal government needs to have jurisdiction over such crimes to further protect its citizens at increased risk for such victimization. Psychological research has demonstrated deleterious mental health outcomes (e.g., depression and anxiety, including posttraumatic stress disorder) for victims of hate crimes.

Thank you for your consideration. I hope that you will work with your colleagues in Congress to quickly enact this critically needed legislation. Please feel free to contact me at (#___)___-___ if I can provide you with additional information.

Sincerely,
Your full Name
Postal Address, including Zip Code
Phone number (Optional)

SAMPLE THANK YOU LETTER

Thank you for taking the time to meet with me on (date) to discuss Fiscal Year 2006 appropriations for the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act and the Elementary and Secondary School Counseling Program.

I remain concerned about the lack of much-needed funding for these important initiatives. I hope that you have expressed our concern to the representative. I am working with the American Psychological Association's legislative staff to secure funding for these critically important programs and hope that the representative will voice his/her support as the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations legislation moves through the appropriations process.

Please consider me a resource, and let me know if I can be of assistance to you and the representative on this or any other issue. Thank you again for taking the time to meet with me. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at (phone number).

Sincerely,