



March 16, 2009

The Honorable George Miller  
Chairman  
Committee on Education and Labor  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

Thank you for your leadership on national service as America faces unprecedented economic challenges. As the current crisis deepens and economically disadvantaged communities become more vulnerable, more than ever, our nation must invest in national service. On behalf of the students, families, staff, and supporters of Citizen Schools, I offer our strong support for the Generations Invigorating Volunteerism and Education (GIVE) Act (H.R. 1388).

The GIVE Act proposes using service and social innovation to address our nation's most pressing challenges in areas such as education, poverty, and health. This bill will improve and strengthen the AmeriCorps program and increase levels of volunteerism.

The GIVE Act also offers vital assistance for the nonprofit sector. Currently, the demand for nonprofit services is greater than ever; yet shrinking revenues are decreasing nonprofit organizations' capacity to meet rising community needs. There are new approaches for expanding the capacity of the nonprofit sector to tap the ingenuity and innovation of citizens working together in local communities to address the problems we face. As such, I also ask you to support an amendment that seeks to add a Volunteer Generation Fund to the bill. Such an amendment would enhance the nonprofit sector's ability to mobilize even more volunteers to help address pressing needs in communities across the country.

The GIVE Act will also mobilize community members to work together to close the educational achievement gap. It establishes an "Education Corps" to improve student achievement in high-need areas. Education corps members could work as instructors, mentors, and tutors in expanded learning time initiatives and afterschool programs.

This legislation will allow organizations like Citizen Schools to serve more children, more effectively. Citizen Schools is a leading national education initiative that uniquely mobilizes thousands of adult volunteers to help improve student achievement and close the achievement gap by teaching skill-building apprenticeships after school. At 44 middle schools in 20 school districts across the country, Citizen Schools programs blend these real-world learning projects with rigorous academic and leadership development activities, preparing low-income students for success in high school, college, the workforce, and civic life.

We appreciate your leadership in allowing greater numbers of Americans to serve our nation at this critical juncture. Citizen Schools looks forward to working with you as the process moves forward. If we can provide you with any further information, please don't hesitate to contact me at [ericschwarz@citizenschools.org](mailto:ericschwarz@citizenschools.org) or (617) 695-2300 or Christin Driscoll, our Executive Director for Public Policy and Communications, at our Washington, DC office at [christindriscoll@citizenschools.org](mailto:christindriscoll@citizenschools.org) or (703) 524-2552.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Eric Schwarz".

Eric Schwarz  
President and CEO  
Citizen Schools