

May 4, 2009

The Honorable George Miller, Chair
House Education and Labor Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

The Council of Educational Facility Planners International (CEFPI) is writing to express our strong support for the **21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act (H.R. 2187)** sponsored by Congressmen Chandler, Miller, Kildee, Loeb sack, and other members.

Modern, safe and technologically advanced schools of the 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act will help local communities increase opportunities for all students to develop the educational skills necessary to achieve and succeed in the 21st century workforce. Modern energy efficient schools also benefit student and staff health. We ask that the House Education and Labor Committee pass this much needed legislation which will authorize a grant program to modernize, renovate and repair public schools. It will also complement and create an ongoing program to the school construction tax credits created in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act.

The demands of today's educational programs and services are overwhelming the structural capacity of the average public school in America built almost fifty years ago. Most urban and rural schools were built much earlier than the 1960's. Fast growing communities across our country cannot build schools fast enough to accommodate the meteoric increase in student populations. Too many of America's children attend school in overcrowded buildings with leaky roofs, faulty electrical systems, insufficient science labs, and outdated technology all of which compromises their ability to achieve, succeed and build the educational foundations necessary for the workforce of the 21st century.

The 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act will assist states and local communities in meeting these staggering needs through federal grants to local school districts for energy efficient school modernization projects. With this bill the Federal Government would provide \$6.4 billion in grants to states and local school districts at a time when significant fiscal relief for local school districts is needed. The federal grants will help states and communities stretch their limited resources to pay for additional school facility projects and essential education programs.

H.R. 2187 will assist states in meeting the school facility needs of local communities by providing resources to repair, renovate and modernize America's public schools. It will stimulate the creation of more than 100,000 new jobs. These jobs will be generated in the construction and related industries including equipment and materials suppliers, architects, engineers, facility planners and managers, roofing contractors, plumbers, electricians, and other construction workers who modernize, renovate and repair schools.

The 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act to be considered by the House Education and Labor Committee this week creates a program that provides federal support for the renovation, repair and building of schools, while leaving education decision making at the local level. The Act provides a federal investment to help renovate, repair and modernize thousands of public schools. Local school districts in every state have school renovation and repair projects that can be underway very quickly if federal financial resources are available to help underwrite the project costs.

CEFPI asks that the House Education and Labor Committee approve **The 21st Century Green High-Performing Public School Facilities Act** and send it on to the House of Representatives for consideration. Modern, more energy efficient, green and better equipped schools will improve learning environments for students, enhance the workplaces for students, teachers and school administrators, and most importantly modern and up-to-date schools will advance student achievement and expand learning opportunities in urban, rural and suburban communities in every state.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

John Ramsey
Executive Director