

**FULL TEXT OF LETTER:**

February 10, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi, The Honorable Harry Reid  
Office of the Speaker, Office of the Senate Majority Leader  
H-232, US Capitol, 528 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515, Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Boehner, The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Office of the House Minority Leader, Office of the Senate Minority Leader  
H-204 The Capitol, 361-A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515, Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Leader Reid, Minority Leader Boehner, and Minority Leader McConnell:

As you enter into conference on the economic recovery and reinvestment plan, we urge you to include the House-passed education figures in the final conference report. As Members of Congress from the great state of New Mexico, when we voted on H.R. 1, we supported an economic recovery and reinvestment plan that addressed many of our state's critical needs, particularly education. We are concerned that the Senate version of the package cuts critical education funding and jeopardizes a critical component to our economic recovery.

Education is not only how our country will be prepared for the economic realities of tomorrow, education is what can help get our economy back on track today. School construction and modernization creates jobs now, putting more people back to work. When more young people and adults are able to attend college because of an increase in the Pell grant, schools benefit and teachers' jobs are protected. Investment in education helps our economy now.

Moreover, education investment helps strengthen our economy well into the future. Students trained today for the jobs of tomorrow means less unemployment moving forward. It means our young people can be ready with the relevant skills needed to find and keep a job in a competitive market. Education helps break the cycle of poverty over the long term. It is through supporting our schools, our teachers, and our students that any short-term economic investment will remain impactful for years to come.

We all want our children to be able to learn in an environment that is safe, accessible, and relevant to the ever-changing times. However, we emphasize that while promoting education in and of itself is a laudable goal—it is also a key part of our economic recovery. We strongly urge you to maintain support for education in the economic recovery and reinvestment plan for the sake of New Mexico and our nation. We thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Ben Ray Luján

Member of Congress

Martin Heinrich

Member of Congress

Harry Teague

Member of Congress