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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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April 26, 2021

BUDGET COMMITTEE

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair DeLauro and Ranking Member Granger:

I am requesting funding for **Project Engagement** in the 18th Congressional District in fiscal year 2022. The entity to receive funding for this project is the Houston Independent School District (HISD), located at 4300 Lyons Avenue, Suite 300, Houston, TX 77339.

This will be used to provide funding for **Project Engagement** at Houston ISD's eight early childhood centers, 160 elementary schools, and 40 middle schools, and 10 K-8 schools (218 schools) for one academic year.

The communities served by HISD are comprised of African Americans (24%) and Hispanic (61.84%) students. HISD is the seventh largest school district in the nation with over 214,000 children served by 278 campuses. These challenges are exacerbated by the fact that HISD has 74.72% of its students who meet the federal criteria for free and reduced lunches; 71.63% of the students served are considered at-risk, and 31.47% of students have limited English proficiency. The onset of COVID-19 brought additional hardship when schools closed due to the health crisis and tens of thousands of students lost critical services and support provided by local schools.

Now that classes are preparing to return in the Fall of 2021, HISD does not have the resources needed to provide these critical services. The state has not spent the nearly \$19 billion in federal funding provided to the State of Texas to address local K-12 education needs of schools, educators, children and youth across our state during the COVID-19 pandemic emergency.

I am increasingly concerned that the state of Texas will not release the remaining \$17.9 billion to public schools and will forego any additional federal funding due to a requirement that the state invest over \$1 billion of the state's own budget in higher education to receive the third round of stimulus funding intended for K-12 public

schools. The State has applied for a waiver to avoid sending that added money to higher education, but the process has caused major delays in local districts receiving funds they desperately need.

The funding made available through this request will be for public schools located throughout the 18th Congressional District that are in dire need of social and emotional services.

I certify that neither I nor my immediate family has any financial interest in this project.”

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Sheila Jackson Lee". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Sheila" being the most prominent.

Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress