

**Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515-2202**

September 24, 2021

The Honorable Miguel Cardona  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave, SW  
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona,

It is well documented that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant negative impact on schools across the United States. Every student, teacher, and classroom has been forced to work through the effects of the pandemic, which has caused a devastating interruption to our children's learning. Nevertheless, schools, teachers, and parents have adapted and worked together to provide educational services to students amidst these uncertain and difficult times.

Congress has responded to the crisis and worked together in a bipartisan manner to provide aid to schools to safely operate and educate through the course of the pandemic. The Covid relief packages passed by Congress provided significant financial resources for educational purposes.

However, I write today to highlight a very serious shortcoming in the formula for the distribution of education relief funding. Public education leaders in our state have repeatedly brought attention to the fact that the Title 1A formula being used to distribute funds have resulted in massive disparities between districts across Michigan.

In response, the State of Michigan passed legislation that included distribution plans for a per-pupil equalization payment for districts that receive less than \$1,093 per pupil through the ESSER III formula grants. It is critically important that all underserved and low-income communities across the state have access to resources to address pandemic-related costs. While districts with the highest number of disadvantaged students must be prioritized, Michigan's equalization plan for their share of federal funding would help to increase the balance in resources provided for all school districts.

As the Department of Education reviews Michigan's plan for distributing federal funds, I urge you to allow the state to move forward with its equalization component. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Respectfully,



Bill Huizenga  
Member of Congress