

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 27, 2026

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you consider the difficult and important work of appropriating precious public resources for the Labor, Health, Human Services and Education Subcommittee, we urge you to include \$410,000,000 for the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP). By 2031, 72% of jobs will require some college or career training. Ensuring that students are prepared for and succeed after high school is essential for our nation's economic, civic, and social wellbeing. Yet for far too many students, education beyond high school remains out of reach. This cost-effective program has helped millions of low-income students progress on the pathway to college and careers, building a more stable future for themselves, their communities, and our nation.

Data shared by the U.S. Department of Education on the GEAR UP class of 2022 affirms the impact that the program is having on young people. GEAR UP high school graduates are enrolling immediately into postsecondary education at rates substantially higher (81.6% in 2022) than the national average for low-income students (52.4%). The GEAR UP program is truly a locally driven, highly flexible model for creating opportunity, improving schools, and strengthening communities and states.

Given this success, a modest increase to GEAR UP funding to \$410,000,000 would allow the U.S. Department of Education to better meet the needs of communities nationwide and would help to ensure that states and communities can compete for new awards. GEAR UP has demonstrated tremendous success with over 588,000 students across a range of backgrounds in large cities, rural areas, and everywhere in between, and is currently active in over 3,100 secondary schools in 44 states across the nation. The proven model starts early in low-income middle schools and follows students through high school and into their first year of postsecondary education. By incorporating scholarship funds, expanding access to rigorous academic courses, tutoring, mentoring, work-based learning, and intensive college and career planning, GEAR UP helps build the capacity of communities where even high school graduation cannot be taken for granted.

At a time of tight budgets, we must invest every dollar responsibly. GEAR UP's proven track record, as well as its critical role in building our economy, makes it a truly worthwhile investment.

Sincerely,



Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



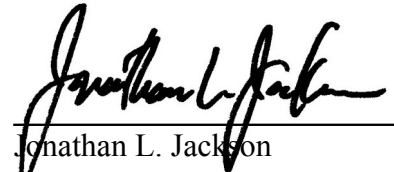
Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



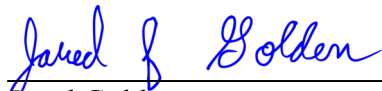
John B. Larson
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Alma S. Adams, Ph.D.
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Jonathan L. Jackson
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Jared Golden
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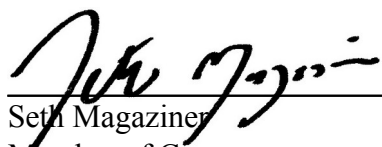
Pramila Jayapal
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Rashida Tlaib
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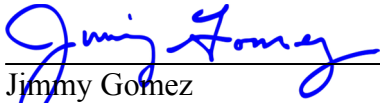
Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



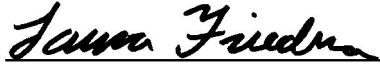
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



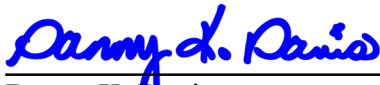
Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



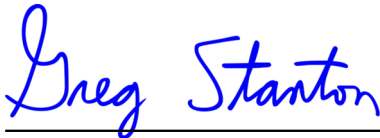
Jimmy Gomez
Member of Congress



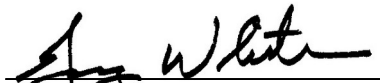
Laura Friedman
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Danny K. Davis
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Greg Stanton
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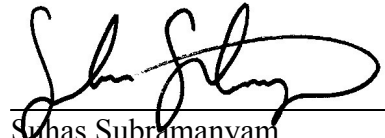
George Whitesides
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Vicente Gonzalez
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Julia Brownley
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Suhas Subramanyam
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Adam Smith
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Val Hoyle
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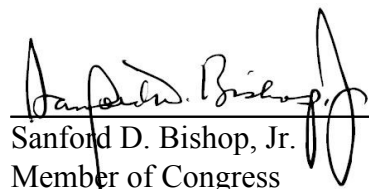
Dwight Evans
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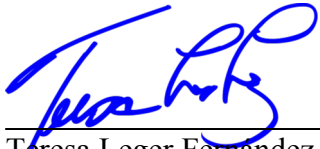
Stephen F. Lynch
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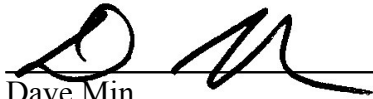
Kevin Mullin
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Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
Member of Congress



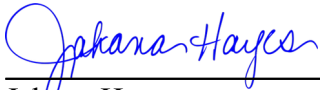
Teresa Leger Fernandez
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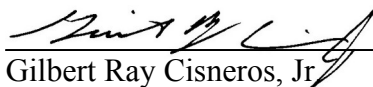
Dave Min
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Lucy McBath
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Jahana Hayes
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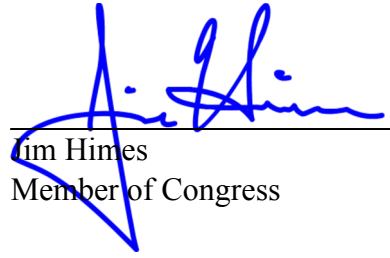
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Chris Pappas
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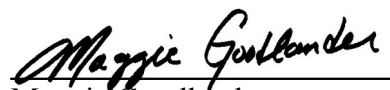
Jim Himes
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Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



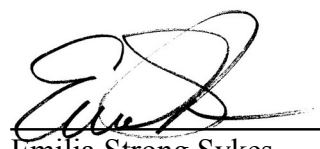
Diana DeGette
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Maggie Goodlander
Member of Congress



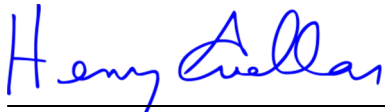
Jim Costa
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Emilia Strong Sykes
Member of Congress



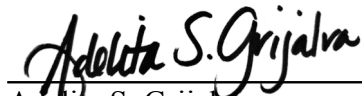
J. Luis Correa
Member of Congress



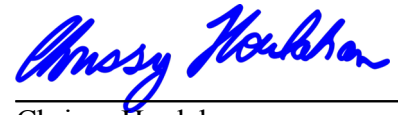
Henry Cuellar
Member of Congress



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Adelita S. Grijalva
Member of Congress



Chrissy Houlahan
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress



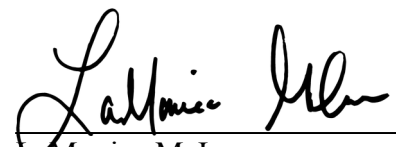
Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



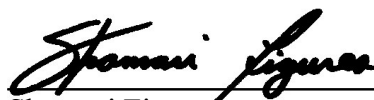
James P. McGovern
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Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
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Shomari Figures
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Josh Riley
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