

GWEN MOORE
4TH DISTRICT, WISCONSIN



WASHINGTON OFFICE:
1239 LONGWORTH HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-4572
FAX: (202) 225-8135

DISTRICT OFFICE:
219 NORTH MILWAUKEE STREET
SUITE 3A
MILWAUKEE, WI 53202-5818
(414) 297-1140
FAX: (414) 297-1086

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES
CAPITAL MARKETS, INSURANCE, AND
GSES SUBCOMMITTEE
HOUSING AND COMMUNITY
OPPORTUNITY SUBCOMMITTEE
DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL MONETARY
POLICY, TRADE AND TECHNOLOGY SUBCOMMITTEE
COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS
COMMITTEE ON BUDGET

September 2, 2009

Secretary Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I applaud the work that the Department of Education, under your leadership, has achieved in seven short months. When Congress included \$4.35 billion for state incentive grants to improve K-12 education in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, we saw it as an opportunity to provide a critically needed boost to an education system that the federal government has largely ignored after the passage of No Child Left Behind.

The Recovery Act enacted in February provided immediate and substantial relief to our communities and allowed us to improve our nation's infrastructure, schools, and economy. As the President releases funding, I have been heartened by the transparency and accountability that he has brought to the process. It is with this continued transparency that I believe the proposed Race to the Top program will achieve its goal of dramatically improving K-12 education for this nation's students.

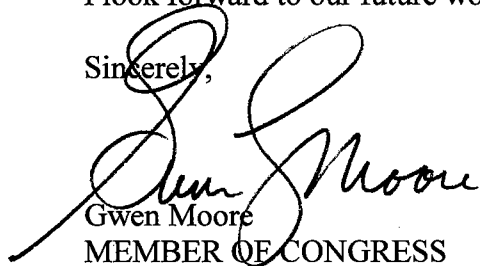
During our discussion on July 9th you discussed your goals for Race to the Top, as well as the qualifications and standards that states need to follow in order to qualify for funding. The Department has also clearly articulated this program's framework in the proposed rule made public in July 2009. I commend you for your transparency during this process, as well as for your willingness to clarify points of particular concern for my constituents at our meeting. Responding to my query regarding requirements for governance of school boards, you unequivocally stated that mayoral control of the school board is not a prerequisite to compete for Race to the Top funds - a position made clearer by the fact that the proposed rule does not mention the type of local school board control required to qualify for dollars.

Regardless of the make-up of the Milwaukee Public School (MPS) board, our community will still face disproportionately high poverty, high teen pregnancy rates, and a state based funding formula that sends more dollars to schools in the suburbs than to the MPS district. At the heart of the Race to the Top proposal, those are the types of challenges that this funding was meant to address. Milwaukee and the state of Wisconsin are committed to improving the educational outcomes of our students, changing the structural and systematic barriers that have hindered progress, and working with each other to

address the achievement gap faced by our inner city students. There is no question that there is room for improvement within the MPS district, and I welcome the opportunity to discuss those challenges and solutions.

I look forward to our future work together on behalf of our country's students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gwen Moore". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "G" and "M".

Gwen Moore
MEMBER OF CONGRESS

GM/rm