

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 1, 2011

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Capitol, Room 128
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
U.S. Capitol, Room 128
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related
Agencies
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 131
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
Subcommittee Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education and Related
Agencies
Dirksen Senate Office Building, Room 131
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Inouye, Chairman Harkin, Vice Chairman Cochran, and Ranking Member Shelby:

Thank you for your leadership and diligent efforts to complete the Fiscal Year 2011 appropriations process.

We recognize that on February 1st of this year, Senator Inouye stated that a moratorium would be adopted by the Appropriations Committee on all earmarks, and that the Committee was in the process of thoroughly reviewing its earmark policy to ensure that every Member has a precise definition of what constitutes an earmark. As you work to operationalize a clear definition of "earmark" under paragraph 5(a) of Senate Rule XLIV, we respectfully ask that you clarify that this term does not apply to authorized, national programs.

Authorized, national programs such as Teach For America, National Board for Professional Teaching Standards, Reading Is Fundamental, National Writing Project, and Close Up are quite different from congressionally-directed spending items, which only benefit a specific state, congressional district or region, and change year-to-year. These programs, on the other hand, have been authorized and are nationally-structured with many years of bipartisan support. They benefit millions of individuals and families in a majority of states, districts, and regions across the country. In short, national, authorized programs are not what has invoked the public's demand for earmark reform and should not be classified as such.

We thank you for your consideration of this request. Should you have any questions, please contact Tasha Patusky in Senator Landrieu's office at (202) 224-5824. We welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter more thoroughly, and look forward to a positive resolution of

this issue.

Sincerely,

Mary Landriau

John F. Kenny

Kirsten E. Hillibrand

Ben Cadi

Mark F. B...

Ron Wyden

Bob Carey, Jr.

Chris Coons

Thomas R. Carper

Mark Warner

Jay R. Byrum