



January 28, 2026

U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator:

On behalf of our 3 million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE NO on the final Fiscal Year 2026 funding package. Votes on this issue may be included in NEA's report card for the 119th Congress.

The education portion, which we support, provides level or near-level funding for critical programs including Title I, the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), and full-service community schools. It also continues to prohibit transferring funds to other federal agencies and includes provisions to ensure that funding is used as Congress intends. We support the inclusion of prohibition language and urge Congress to affirm its power of the purse by strengthening the guardrails governing use of appropriated funds. The lack of stronger guardrails seriously threatens the Department of Education's ability to carry out its statutory responsibilities.

While we support the education portion, we strongly oppose the package as a whole because it provides additional funding for the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) and does not address accountability, transparency, or the administration's cruel and fundamentally un-American approach to immigration enforcement. Like the dismantling of the Department of Education, this approach is fueled by disdain for the rule of law—the bedrock of our Constitution.

In Minneapolis, federal agents gunned down two 37-year-old American citizens—Renee Good, a mother of three, and Alex Pretti, an intensive-care nurse in a VA hospital. Within minutes of their deaths and without evidence, top administration officials declared the victims “domestic terrorists” and blamed them for their own deaths. Sworn eyewitness accounts and bystander videos tell a very different—and very brutal—story. The administration is asking us to deny what we see with our own eyes and hear with our own ears.

Unfortunately, Minneapolis is an example, not an isolated case. Across the country, masked and heavily armed agents from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) have arrested U.S. citizens and legal immigrants, brutally attacked legal protesters, conducted illegal searches, employed racial profiling, and detained immigrant children. Schools, medical facilities, places of worship, and other community spaces have been invaded. Over the last year, ICE and CBP have taken more than 325,000 people; at least 24 of them suffered gunshot wounds, resulting in at least seven fatalities.

The carnage has traumatized students, interrupted learning, and undermined the basic premise that schools are safe places to learn. Educators are seeing the impact firsthand—in increased anxiety, absenteeism, and a mounting need for counseling and mental health support.

This is no longer solely an immigration issue. It has become a matter of human rights, civil rights, and the safety of our communities.

We cannot support DHS funding that, among other things, allows the continued deployment of armed and masked federal agents by a lawless agency lacking adequate oversight and accountability. Congress must demand transparency and enforce strict limits on the use of force. Our priorities also include using federal resources to uphold the civil liberties and due process rights of citizens and non-citizens alike.

For all these reasons, we urge you to VOTE NO on the Fiscal Year 2026 funding package that includes the DHS bill.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Kimberly Johnson Trinca', written in a cursive style.

Kimberly Johnson Trinca
Director of Government Relations
National Education Association