December 17, 2008

United States Senate    United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510   Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators and Representatives:

Our children are the nation’s most precious resource, and yet, they are the silent victims of the economic downturn and foreclosure crisis. We ask you to include $72 million in emergency funding for the McKinney-Vento Education for Homeless Children and Youth Program in the economic stimulus package in order to support the most vulnerable victims of these dual crises.

School districts across the country are facing unprecedented increases in the numbers of homeless students entering their classrooms. Research shows that these students are less likely to perform at grade level in math and reading, are more likely to repeat a grade, and are less likely to graduate from high school. Federal support is necessary to ensure that these homeless students have the ability to stay in their schools, even if they are forced from their homes, through transportation and other support services.

An estimated 2 million children will be directly impacted by the foreclosure crisis. This estimate is conservative because it does not include children in families who rent their homes, and it is these children who are often the most likely to find themselves without stable housing. The $72 million emergency appropriation would serve 483,221 homeless children and youth, roughly one-fourth of the children facing foreclosure nationwide.

Our country is facing turbulent times, and our children are feeling the impact. The educational stability provided by these resources will help homeless children cope with the crisis at hand, continue with their education, and achieve their full potential.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Excellent Education
American Counseling Association
American Humane Association
AMS Educational Consultation Svs, LLC.
Break the Cycle
Camp Fire USA
Communities In Schools
Education Law Center
EPIC-Every Person Influences Children
Family Connection of Easton, PA
Family Promise
First Focus
GLSEN - the Gay, Lesbian and Straight Education Network
Knowledge Alliance
Learning Disabilities Association of America
National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
National Association of Elementary School Principals
National Association of School Psychologists
National Association of Secondary School Principals
National Center for Housing and Child Welfare
National Coalition for Parent Involvement in Education
National Collaboration for Youth
National Community Education Association
National Council of Jewish Women
National Education Association
National Network for Youth
National Policy and Advocacy Council on Homelessness
National PTA
National School Boards Association
Pacific Islands Center for Educational Development
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
Perspectives, Inc
Public Education Network
Rebecca Project for Human Rights
Rimrock Foundation
School Social Work Association of America
The Making An Educational Difference Foundation, Inc.
United Way of America
Voices for America’s Children
YMCA of the USA
Youthbuild USA