



M. JODI RELL
GOVERNOR

STATE OF CONNECTICUT
EXECUTIVE CHAMBERS

October 29, 2009

The Honorable Arne Duncan
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Duncan:

On September 30, 2009 the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Inspector General issued an Alert Memorandum entitled "Potential Consequences of the Maintenance of Effort Requirements under the ARRA State Fiscal Stabilization Fund." In that report, the Inspector General singled out Connecticut as an example of a state in which the use of SFSF funds could potentially jeopardize the achievement of the educational reform objectives of the ARRA.

I note that in order to qualify for SFSF funding I, as Governor, had to certify that Connecticut would take actions to improve teacher effectiveness and address inequities in the distribution of highly qualified teachers, implement statewide longitudinal data systems, improve the quality of academic assessment tools and implement rigorous academic content standards and provide intensive support for struggling schools. I remain firmly committed to achieving these goals and I believe that the State's use of SFSF funding fully supports achievement of these goals. Further, Connecticut's use of SFSF funds has been entirely consistent with the requirements of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 and the guidance issued by the Department of Education concerning the application for SFSF funds.

The serious economic recession that we are experiencing has resulted in decreased State revenues and Connecticut has had to cut funding for many critical state programs. Nevertheless, before the ARRA was passed by the Congress and signed by President Obama I pledged that I would not cut funding for education in Connecticut. As permitted by ARRA and approved by your Department the State has used SFSF funds to maintain

the 2009 funding level. The State's share of this funding has been maintained at the 2006 level, as required by ARRA.

I am therefore deeply concerned about the Inspector General's alert memorandum which suggests that our use of SFSF funds is not consistent with the educational reform goals of the ARRA. I urge you to make sure that the ARRA is consistently interpreted by all employees of the Department of Education so as to avoid any confusion about the proper use of SFSF funds in the future.

Very truly yours,


M. Jodi Rell