

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 4, 2023

The Honorable Miguel Cardona
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20202

Secretary Cardona,

We write in strong opposition to the recent Department of Education decision to eliminate support for longstanding archery and hunter education classes in schools.

These scholastic programs are where millions of kids learn safe and responsible firearm handling and storage, and this egregious, irresponsible overreach by your Department will have far-reaching negative consequences. Eliminating this funding through executive “interpretation” of law flies in the face of congressional intent¹. Your actions to advance a radical Far-Left anti-gun agenda are not only an abuse of executive power but eliminate the opportunity for kids to learn important skills, safety, and life lessons.

Hunting and archery education programs have long enjoyed bipartisan support. These proven programs have near unblemished safety records while providing opportunity for kids to learn about the outdoors and develop useful skills. The National Archery in the Schools Program boasts 1.3 million students from nearly 9,000 schools across 49 states who are enrolled in archery courses. The Hunter Education Association certifies more than 500,000 young hunters each year – supporting both stewardship of our environment and responsible firearms handling. Your actions that strip these critical opportunities from our children due to a purposeful misinterpretation of congressional intent is shameful and dishonest.

As mental health continues to be a major issue for teenagers across the country, eliminating activities where kids are able to spend time outdoors is only going to make things worse. Extracurricular and outdoor activities have proven benefits to students, and according to survey data from the National Archery in the Schools Program, 40% of students said their participation in the program was a motivational factor for them to do better in the classroom².

Even in New York State, the Democrat-controlled state government recently implemented a pilot youth hunting program to allow 12- and 13-year-olds to hunt with mentors. Over two years, this program ended with an exemplary record for safety for nearly ten thousand youth hunters, teaching the next generation essential lessons on stewardship and safety³.


¹ 20 U.S.C. § 7906

² <https://www.naspschools.org/academic-impact-of-nasp/>

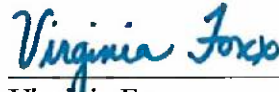
³ <https://www.dec.ny.gov/press/124802.html>

This gross misinterpretation of the law and your abuse of executive authority harms kids and communities all across the country, all in the name of moving forward with a radical anti-Second Amendment agenda. We call on the Department to reverse this misguided decision immediately and provide our children with the critical educational opportunities they need.

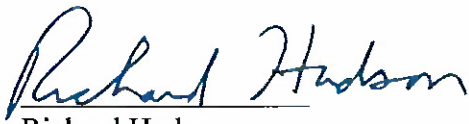
Sincerely,



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress



Virginia Foxx
Member of Congress



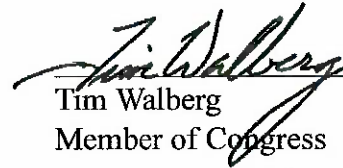
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Jake LaTurner
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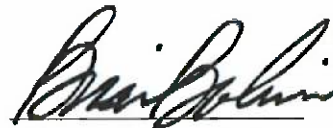
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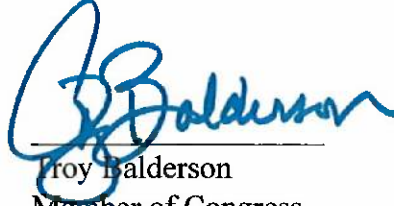
Robert E. Latta
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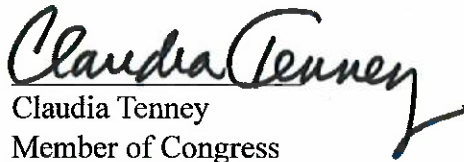
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Claudia Tenney
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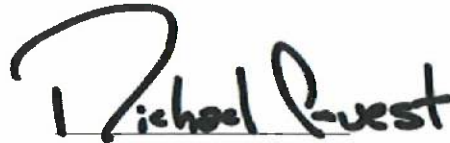
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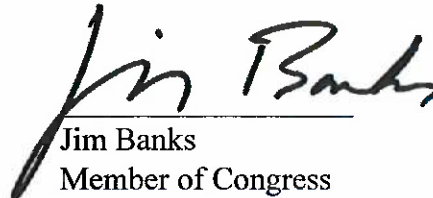
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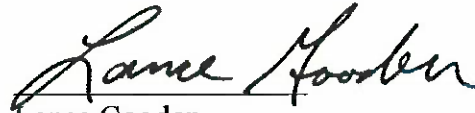
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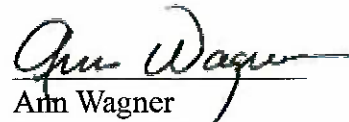
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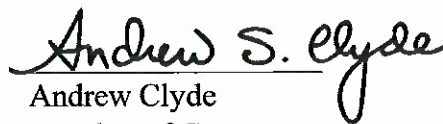
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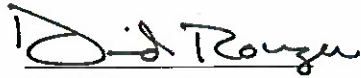
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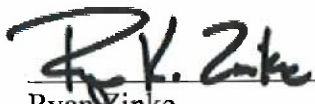
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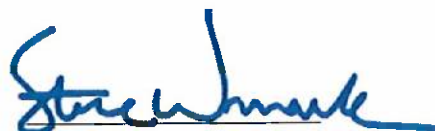
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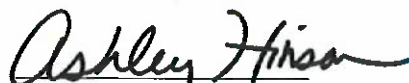
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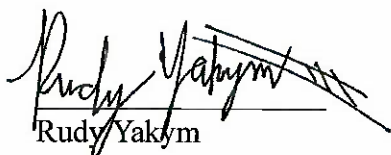
Ashley Hinson
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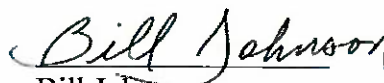
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Rudy Yakym
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Bill Johnson
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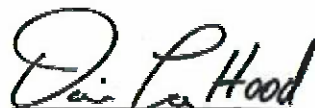
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