Dear Senator

I am a **(resident, parent, etc.)** of **XXX** School District. As the 2017-18 State Budget is in final negotiations, I am writing to express **my strong support for the Senate’s plan to increase Foundation Aid funding beyond the Governor’s proposal and reject the Governor’s plan to repeal the Foundation Aid Formula.**

New Foundation Aid funding proposed by the Governor ($428 Million) is grossly insufficient to meet the needs of the schools in your district and across the state. **Research done by all of the state’s major public education advocacy groups, as well as the Regents, agree that $2 Billion in new Foundation Aid must be included in this year’s state budget.**

The long history of gross inequity that has plagued the Foundation Aid distribution formula has never fully served the needs of our impoverished and less wealthy districts as they rely more heavily on this funding source for their operational needs. Therefore, **it is vital that the Senate supports the separation of Community Schools funding from general Foundation Aid.** Since Community Schools moneys have a restricted use and many school districts are not eligible for these funds, they dilute the proposed Foundation Aid amount and financially penalize non-eligible school districts, and should therefore be in a separate category.

**It is also of upmost importance that the Senate more fully supports impoverished and less wealthy districts by phasing in over the next three years the $4.3 Billion in Foundation Aid that is still owed to our school**s **as a result of the CFE court decision in 2006.**

(BRIEFLY, feel free to add specifics of how the lack of a predictable and equitable aid formula has disadvantaged your students. Example: “Our district is no longer able to offer AP programs.”)

This year’s state budget is critical for the students in my school district, as well as for my entire community. We need you to keep fighting hard for the concerns of your constituents.

Thank you.