



February 25, 2019

Committee on Education and Labor  
United States House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of our three million members and the 50 million students they serve, we urge you to VOTE YES on the Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2019 (H.R. 865). Votes associated with this issue may be included in NEA's Report Card for the 116th Congress.

**Poor conditions undermine student learning**

- According to the [National Center for Education Statistics](#), the average public school building in the United States is 44 years old.
- The [2017 Infrastructure Report Card](#) of the American Society of Civil Engineers gives the condition of America's 100,000 public school buildings an overall grade of D+.
- The [U.S. Environmental Protection Agency](#) attributes poor indoor air quality in more than 60,000 schools to cockroaches, rodents, dust mites, fungi, and respiratory irritants from sources of formaldehyde and nitrogen dioxide.
- A [2017 EducationSuperHighway](#) report found that over 19,000 schools serving 11.6 million students "are without the minimum connectivity necessary for digital learning."

**The Rebuild America's Schools Act of 2019 would help by:**

- Creating a \$70 billion grant program and \$30 billion tax-credit bond program that target high-poverty schools whose facilities pose health and safety risks to students and staff.
- Restoring Qualified Zone Academy Bonds (QZABs), which were eliminated by the 2017 GOP tax bill, and permanently increase the national limit to \$1.4 billion per year. QZABs allow qualifying schools to finance renovations, repairs, and investments in technology at below-market rates — sometimes, as low as zero.
- Leveraging existing public programs or public-private partnerships to expand access to high-speed broadband sufficient for digital learning.
- Creating over 1.9 million jobs (based on an Economic Policy Institute analysis that found each \$1 billion spent on construction creates 17,785 jobs).

For all of these reasons, we urge you to VOTE YES on H.R. 865.

Sincerely,

Marc Egan  
Director of Government Relations  
National Education Association