

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20510

September 13, 2023

The Honorable Virginia Foxx  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
2176 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger  
Chairwoman  
Committee on Appropriations  
H-307 The Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
2101 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations  
1036 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx, Chairwoman Granger, Ranking Member Scott, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

I write to respectfully request that the House Committee on Education and the Workforce and the House Committee on Appropriations pass legislation to ensure that federal funding can be used for archery, hunter safety, culinary and related outdoor education programs offered by schools across the country.

As you know, the U.S. Department of Education (“Department”) recently interpreted a provision in the Bipartisan Safer Communities Act (BSCA) in a manner that resulted in the potential halting of federal funds for archery, hunter safety and related education programs in schools. I believe the Department’s interpretation goes against Congress’s original intent in the BSCA.

For decades, schools across the country have provided archery and hunter safety education classes with funding authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965. These classes are especially important in rural communities where many people hunt for both food and sport, including many of my constituents in Oregon.

In light of the Committee on Education and the Workforce’s upcoming September 14<sup>th</sup> markup of H.R. 5110, the Protecting Hunting Heritage and Education Act, I respectfully request that the Committee make narrow updates to the bill’s language in order to ensure that federal funding can continue to go toward archery, hunter safety, culinary and related outdoor programs offered by schools across the country. While I support the intent behind H.R. 5110 as currently drafted, I believe narrow changes are needed to ensure that school safety and related programs can continue to receive ESEA funding, while also preserving the firearm safety and gun violence prevention goals of the BSCA.

Specifically, I recommend the Committee consider incorporating language recently proposed<sup>1</sup> by a group of bipartisan Senators, many of whom sponsored and supported the BSCA when it passed into law last year. This language is as follows:

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.cornyn.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Letter-to-Senate-Appropriations-to-Clarify-BSCA-re\\_Archery-and-Hunting-Safety-Education-FINAL.pdf](https://www.cornyn.senate.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Letter-to-Senate-Appropriations-to-Clarify-BSCA-re_Archery-and-Hunting-Safety-Education-FINAL.pdf)

*Sec. . (a) Section 8526(7) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7906(7)) shall not prohibit the use of funds made available under this Act or any other Act for activities carried out under programs authorized by the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 that are otherwise permissible under such programs and that provide students with educational enrichment activities and instruction, such as archery, hunter safety education, outdoor education, or culinary arts.*

*(b) Subsection (a) shall be in effect until title VIII of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 is reauthorized.*

I also support similar language included in legislation recently introduced by Senator Jon Tester, S. 2735 – the Defending Hunters’ Education Act<sup>2</sup> – which incorporates bill text that protects school safety and related programs while also clarifying Congressional intent in the BSCA.

Many sporting and conservation organizations support the above legislative language, including Backcountry Hunters & Anglers, the Congressional Sportsmen’s Foundation, and the National Wildlife Federation.

I urge both Committees work together to pass this language in any upcoming legislative vehicle, including in any upcoming government funding bill, to ensure this legislative fix can pass into law as soon as possible.

Let me be clear: I support the BSCA, which passed into law with bipartisan support in Congress and took important steps toward achieving greater gun violence prevention. I also support the intent behind H.R. 5110, but strongly feel that additional clarifying language needs to be added in order to ensure all archery, hunter safety, culinary and related outdoor safety programs can continue to receive federal funding under the ESEA.

Thank you for your work on this issue, and for your review and consideration of my request.

Sincerely,



Val T. Hoyle  
Member of Congress

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<sup>2</sup> <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/2735/text?s=5&r=2>