



LOUISE M. SLAUGHTER
CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES
25TH DISTRICT, NEW YORK

November 12, 2015

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services and Education
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We are most appreciative for the ongoing support you have provided to the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (NTID). We respectfully request NTID be funded at \$69,016,000 in the Fiscal Year 2016 (FY 16) Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill.

Celebrating the 50th anniversary of being signed into federal law this June, NTID is the world's first technological college for deaf students. Providing a college education leading to jobs and career advancement for deaf and hard-of-hearing students from across the country, NTID is a federal program that works. Support for NTID is an investment with significant returns in the form of increased employment and reduced dependence on federal Supplemental Security Income (SSI) and Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) payments for their students.

In FY 13, NTID was appropriated level funding of \$65,422,000 in Operations but took a 5.23% hit from sequestration, resulting in a final FY 13 appropriation of \$62,000,000. In FY 14, to prevent further reductions in the workforce and the possibility of turning away qualified deaf students, NTID's funding was restored and raised to \$66,291,000. This funding and the \$67,016,000 it received in FY 15 allowed NTID to invest in critical areas such as instruction, sign language and captioning services, equipment, and student affordability. The President's budget for FY 16 proposes that NTID be level funded at \$67,016,000 in Operations. We respectfully request that they receive \$69,016,000 to maintain the critical investments they have made in improving access, instruction and affordability for students, as well expand their outreach efforts.

In recent years, NTID has made significant strides in improving its efficiency and reducing costs. NTID decreased its workforce from 602 staff in January 2011 to 521 staff – a 13% reduction. NTID has reduced its non-personnel expenditures by over 30% including areas such as equipment purchases, building and equipment maintenance, instructional supplies, and

professional travel. NTID is committed to seeking alternative sources of public and private support, with 27% of NTID's Operations budget coming from non-federal funds, up from 9% in 1970. From FY 2010 to the current fiscal year, student tuition and fees increased by 37% and since FY 2006, NTID raised almost \$21 million in support from individuals and organizations. NTID has also recognized that construction funding is limited and planned for critical and long overdue renovations using existing federal and non-federal funds.

For FY 2016, NTID enrolled 1,413 students. Enrollment is high because students and parents recognize the success of NTID's exemplary employment rates as well as continuance in higher education programs. NTID's first-year persistence rates and graduation rates for both sub-baccalaureate students and baccalaureate students were higher than the national rates for two-year and four-year colleges. In FY 15, 94% of NTID's graduates have been placed in jobs commensurate with their education level, consistent with NTID's average employment rate of 93% for the last five years. Using data from the Social Security Administration, NTID can show that their graduates over their lifetimes are employed at a higher rate and earn more (therefore paying more in taxes) than deaf and hard-of-hearing students who graduate from other institutions. For example, by age 50, the median salary for NTID deaf graduates with bachelor's degrees was \$58,000 compared to \$21,000 for deaf students who graduated from other institutions. Additionally, NTID graduates collect SSI and SSDI at lower rates than deaf and hard-of-hearing students who do not attend college.

In addition to managing inflationary costs and supporting operations, an FY 16 appropriation of \$69,016,000 would enable NTID to begin establishing regional partnerships via subcontract with external organizations, consistent with NTID's mission and strategic plan. Such partnerships will expand NTID's geographic reach of services and activities for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing, including a focus on promoting training and postsecondary participation in STEM fields; working with NTID faculty to develop postsecondary preparation for students; providing professional development for teachers; and developing partnerships with business and industry to promote employment opportunities for individuals who are deaf and hard of hearing.

The return on investment we realize from supporting the professional and technical education of young deaf Americans at NTID is profound, from their astounding employment rate to their impressive earnings to their decreased reliance on federal entitlements. Therefore, we strongly support NTID's unique mission and their request for \$69,016,000 for FY 16. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Louise M. Slaughter
Member of Congress