

July 14, 2003

Rosie Mauk
Director of Americorps
Corporation for National & Community Service
1201 New York Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20525

Dear Ms. Mauk:

I am greatly distressed by the Corporation for National Service's decision to discontinue funding Teach for America (TFA). I've repeatedly gone on record over the last several weeks in support of a supplemental appropriation for the AmeriCorps program in order for Louisiana communities to continue benefiting from national service. Teach for America is one of my main reasons for doing so.

Teach for America has been working to create opportunities for Louisiana's children for ten years. First Lady Laura Bush recognized the impact TFA is having on Louisiana communities when she visited a TFA classroom in Baton Rouge just over a year ago. The program has been so valuable to Louisiana that despite difficult budgetary constraints, I proposed and the legislature funded an increase in state funding to Teach for America by over 25% for the coming fiscal year. The truth is, this program's impact is worth the investment, which is why I urge you to reconsider your decision.

In Louisiana we've been holding students and schools accountable for performance since even before the federal No Child Left Behind Act. For that reason, I have been a vocal supporter of President Bush's focus on research-based results when it comes to educating our children. Simply put, no other program focuses on documented results and high academic standards to the extent that TFA does.

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I know that at this point, it is still unclear what will ultimately happen with respect to AmeriCorps funding over the next year. Despite these uncertainties, I strongly urge you to continue funding Teach for America.

Sincerely,

M. J. "Mike" Foster, Jr.

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c: President George Bush
Senator Bill Frist
Senator Tom Daschle
Speaker Dennis Hastert
Representative Tom Delay
Representative Nancy Pelosi
LA Congressional Delegation
John Bridgeland, USA Freedom Corps
James F. Manning, Corporation for National and community Service