



October 20, 2015

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
United States Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jason Chaffetz
Chairman
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Ron Johnson
Chairman
Committee on Homeland Security and Government Affairs
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Diane Feinstein
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner, Chairman Chaffetz, Chairman Johnson, and Senator Feinstein:

On behalf of DC Preparatory Academy (“DC Prep”) I am writing to thank you for your leadership on H.R. 10, the reauthorization of the SOAR Act, and to express our strong support for the legislation.

There are currently over 85,000 students attending District of Columbia Public Schools and DC public charter schools. These numbers have been climbing steadily after enduring four decades of stagnation and decline. The improving quality of the educational options we offer families in the nation’s capital is a primary reason for this growth, and the SOAR Act has provided valuable resources for thousands of DC children – resources which have supported these improvements.

dcprep.org/power

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As a Charter Management Organization exclusively based in traditionally under-resourced neighborhoods of the nation's capital, DC Prep is committed to providing a high-quality education to over 1,500 preschool through 8th grade students across five campuses in our growing network of public, tuition-free charter schools. Since opening our doors in 2003 at our flagship campus, DC Prep has been mission-driven to bridge the educational divide in Washington, DC by increasing the number of students from underserved communities with the academic preparation and personal character to succeed in competitive high schools and colleges. And, proudly, for the past three years, DC Prep has delivered on this promise to students and families, by being the #1-performing network of charter schools citywide.

Since opening our doors over a decade ago, DC Prep students, faculty, and families have directly benefited from SOAR Act funds. These funds have enabled our network to renovate our Benning Campus in Northeast DC to accommodate our new middle school. In addition, we have increased our capacity to allow us to better use and analyze data, provide more targeted intervention for reading and implement the Next Generation Science Standards.

Broadly, SOAR funds have enabled the DC charter sector to grow with quality; today, the sector serves nearly 50% of Washington, DC public education students. Your continued support for H.R. 10 and reauthorization of the SOAR Act, is critical to ensuring that DC students and families can continue to access high-quality public education options in the nation's capital.

I thank you for your time and considering to this urgent and important matter. If I can be of further assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out.

Sincerely,

Emily K. Lawson
DC Prep Founder and CEO