

17 September 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor
2205 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller,

I urge you to include the draft *United States and the World Act* and requested appropriations in the legislation that will continue the appropriations for the Elementary and Secondary Education Act for fiscal 2009.

The *United States and the World Act* authorizes \$225 million annually in new federal funding for the professional development of prospective, future and in-service teachers in the field of international and foreign language studies and for other purposes. It will help restore balance to the federal incentives for professional development of history-social science teachers now skewed by the *Teaching Traditional American History Act* that in its first eight years has allocated more than \$1 billion “to teach American history as a separate academic subject and not as a component of social studies”. This important federal incentive has the unintended consequence of acting as a disincentive for enhancing the competence of teachers in the world history, international organizations, international relations and other areas of social studies.

The *United States and the World Act* will provide significant new resources to better prepare our youth for the global challenges they face. Under Sec. 107 of the draft legislation, international education is defined to include “international economics and international and non-governmental organizations”. This will provide new federal incentives to educate our youth about the role of the International Labor Organization, its conventions and organized labor in establishing, promoting and defending internationally recognized standards for working families worldwide as well as in our nation.

The urgency of the Act is demonstrated by a widely used world history textbook in California 10th grade world history classes that includes the IMF, World Bank and WTO in its index, but not the ILO or Samuel Gompers. Our Washington staff regularly meet congressional staff who don't know what the letters AFL-CIO stand for.

Labor history and world history are integral components of the American story, and all American students should receive this well-rounded historical perspective in their studies. I believe that the *United States and the World Act* will further that goal and thank you for your consideration on this issue.

Sincerely,