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Statement by
Ioannis Miaoulis
Museum of Science, Boston, President and Director
National Center for Technological Literacy, Founder to the
Subcommittee on Labor, Health & Human Service, and Education and Related Agencies
United States Senate regarding the
U.S. Department of Education FY18 Budget
June 2, 2017

Chairman Blunt, Ranking Member Murray, and Members of the Subcommittee:

As president and director of the Museum of Science, Boston and founder of the National Center for Technological Literacy (NCTL), I appreciate the opportunity to submit this statement in support of the Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) grant program (Title IV, Part A) of the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). On behalf of our 1.4 annual visitors, 300 plus employees, and 10.5 million students impacted by our engineering curricula programs, I respectfully urge the subcommittee to provide maximum funding for the SSAE grant program.

The SSAE grant program is authorized at \$1.6 billion for fiscal year 2018 (FY18). This program is the consolidation more than 20 school programs, including the Math Science Partnership program, funded at \$152 million in FY15, into a single formula-funded block grant program. If fully funded, school districts will have the flexibility, as intended by Congress, to choose how to spend their dollars to support safe and healthy schools, well-rounded education, and the effective use of technology.

For the NCTL, housed at the Museum, the critical education programs meant to be supported by SSAE funds include **increasing student access to STEM, computer science**, accelerated learning courses, college and career counseling and **providing educators with technology professional development opportunities**.

Ideally, Congress should fully fund the SSAE program in FY18. The FY17 appropriation of only \$400 million, just 25 percent of the authorization, regrettably turned the program into a competitive grant, likely depriving smaller districts that are less likely to compete of their fair share. Additionally, the \$400 million does not allow states and districts to make meaningful investments in the full range of programs that, when combined, improve conditions for learning and help students receive a well-rounded education.

On behalf of the millions of students, parents and educators that we support, we urge you to appropriate maximum funding for FY18 for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grant program under Title IV, A of ESSA and allow states and districts to make meaningful investments in STEM programs that are critical to student success.