



**AMERICAN
PRINTING
HOUSE** 

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For Immediate Release

Federal Budget Increase Improves Access to Educational materials for Students Who are Blind/Visually Impaired

Additional \$2 Million to be disbursed across all states as part of Federal Quota Program

LOUISVILLE, Ky. (April 2, 2018) – Students who are blind or visually impaired received a much-needed boost with the passage of the Fiscal Year 2018 Federal Budget. Through the bill, an additional \$2 million was allocated to the Federal Quota program for the current budget cycle, bringing the annual expenditure in fiscal year 2018 to over \$27 million.

The Federal Quota program is part of The Act to Promote the Education of the Blind (The Act), a federal law enacted in 1879. Through The Act, The American Printing House for the Blind (APH) has a responsibility to implement and administer a nationwide program to develop, manufacture, study, and improve educational learning materials for those who meet the federal definition of blindness. Federal funds, known as Quota Funds, are allocated to educational agencies in the U.S. to purchase APH products and materials for students and adults working below college level who are blind or visually impaired. Currently, the Act serves 63,357 individuals throughout the country. This number varies slightly each year, and is based on an annual census taken each January.

“APH would like to thank Senator Mitch McConnell (R-KY) and Congressman John Yarmuth (D-KY) for ensuring that the students we serve have the same access to products and services as their sighted friends,” commented Craig Meador, President of APH. “We also want to recognize the Ex-Officio Trustees who, through our Leaders to Leaders program, reached out to their federal legislators to tell their students’ stories. By working together, we kept our promise to students who are blind and visually impaired, and will continue to make a difference in removing barriers as we create a more accessible world for everyone.”

According to Gary Mudd, APH Vice President of Government and Community Affairs, “This increase comes at a very crucial time. With state budgets, along with the federal budget, experiencing cuts and minimal increases, funding for the population we serve is critically important. Our actions this year lay the groundwork for our Keep the Promise Campaign which we will be sharing with members of Congress over the next few years.”

Keep the Promise is an APH initiative designed to educate lawmakers and other influencers on the importance of increasing the Federal Quota funds to ensure every child has an equal chance to succeed. Under the current Federal Quota system, funding is allocated to each state and outlying area annually for the purchase of braille/large print textbooks, braillewriters/braille paper, screen reading software, tactile tools and other educational products. In fiscal year 2017,



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the per capita allocation was \$269. As a comparison, it is estimated that the cost of learning tools for a 10th grade physics class is approximately \$1500 for a student who is sighted, versus over \$36,000 for a student who is blind. Increasing the Federal Quota allotment is vital to ensure that students with vision loss are prepared to enter the 21st century workforce.

About American Printing House for the Blind

American Printing House for the Blind is a worldwide leader in designing innovative lifelong learning solutions for children and adults who are blind or visually impaired. In this fast-changing world, we believe in the power and necessity of learning to open the doors to educational success, satisfying employment, social inclusion, active citizenship, and personal well-being. We level the learning playing field by providing specialized technology, materials, products, and services that are essential for education and life. American Printing House for the Blind is headquartered at 1839 Frankfort Avenue in Louisville, Kentucky. For more information, please visit www.aph.org.

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