

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Representative Rush Holt (NJ-12) today announced that New Jersey will receive more than \$66 million in economic recovery funding as part of the U.S. Department of Education’s School Improvement Grant (SIG) program, which helps turn around persistently low achieving schools. Holt supported the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, which set aside \$3.5 billion for SIG.

“This investment reflects the basic principle that children should be given every opportunity to receive an excellent education,” Holt said. “New Jersey students shouldn’t be punished because of budgetary constraints, and this funding provides them support.”

School districts with persistently low achieving schools, defined as those that perform in the bottom 5 percent of the state or have graduation rates that fall below 60 percent, must apply for the grant funding through the Department of Education. At the time of application, school districts must indicate that they will implement one of four models to turn around their low-performing schools. Options include curriculum reform, professional development or closing then re-opening a school as a charter school.

More information about the program can be found at <http://www2.ed.gov/programs/sif/index.html>