Dear Representative/Senator,

Our local schools are facing a severe funding crisis. Two years of very high inflation, coupled with state policies that limit available revenue, have caused a serious budget crisis that threatens serious and lasting harm to our schools and students.

**[PLEASE FILL IN INFORMATION ABOUT THE THREATENED CUTS TO YOUR SCHOOLS, SUCH AS “In my school district of, we are facing upwards of $million in cuts, which may result in the loss of, educators serving our students, and the closure of programs.”]**

A primary cause of this crisis, particularly in lower income districts, has been the cap on inflation adjustments in Chapter 70. When inflation was 7 percent in FY23 and 8 percent in FY24, the inflation adjustment in the Chapter 70 formula was only 4.5 percent. This led to dramatic underfunding of our schools. That harm has been done, but you can take steps to make sure the same harm does not continue into next year and forever into the future. The attached explanation from the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the Massachusetts Association of School Superintendents, the Massachusetts Association of School Committees and AFT Massachusetts. explains a flaw in the formula that allows the underfunding to continue indefinitely, and a straightforward way to fix the flaw and restore essential funding for our schools. Please ask the Ways and Means Committee to include this fix in the FY25 budget.

Even with that fix some school districts will not receive significant increases in Chapter 70 aid, yet they, too, are suffering from the unusual increases in costs due to high inflation. To protect those districts, we ask that you support two important strategies. The first strategy is to provide $100 per pupil Chapter 70 minimum aid. The second is to fund a Whole Child Grant proposed by the MTA that would target middle-income districts and help address the serious student mental health issues we are seeing by helping school districts hire additional school nurses, librarians, school counselors, school adjustment counselors, social workers and school psychologists.

Please let us know if you would like additional information on any of these issues. I hope you will be willing to advocate as strongly as possible with your colleagues to take these steps to address the funding crisis threatening our schools and our ability to meet the needs of our students.

Sincerely,