

Vermont schools are in line for another infusion of nearly \$25.5 million in economic recovery funds, Sens. Patrick Leahy (D-Vt.) and Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.) and Rep. Peter Welch (D-Vt.) announced today.

The funds authorized by last year's American Recovery and Reinvestment Act are in addition to an estimated \$19 million included for Vermont schools in new legislation signed Tuesday by President Obama. That separate support for schools is expected to fund 300 Vermont teaching jobs.

"Ensuring that young Vermonters have access to the best education possible is one of my highest priorities for our future," Leahy said. "When Congress passed the Recovery Act last year, we wanted to prevent counterproductive cuts in education since state budgets have suffered under the economic downturn. In addition to the federal funding signed into law yesterday to support Vermont teachers, these recovery act dollars will help ensure Vermont schools and teachers have the resources necessary to continue to provide quality education to Vermont's students."

"People are hurting, and in the midst of this terrible recession it is absolutely unacceptable to turn our backs on our children and on education," said Sanders, a member of the Senate education committee. The extra aid, Sanders added, "takes the pressure off local government to have to raise property taxes and it takes the pressure off state government."

"Investing in our children's future is one of the most important investments we can make," Welch said. "These funds deliver on Vermont's request for flexible education funding that can be used in areas where it's most needed. After yesterday's vote that gave state and local governments some necessary breathing room, this funding is good news and will ensure Vermont's children continue to have access to an excellent education."

Vermont schools already had received \$182 million under the recovery act, which Congress passed in 2009 to stimulate the economy and help the country recover from the worst recession since the 1930s. The state recently reported that recovery dollars were used to fund more than 250 education jobs from April 1 to June 30 of this year.

"With this application, Vermont provided us with basic information on what is working in their classrooms," said U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan. "This data is a critical tool in helping us work together—with students, parents, teachers, administrators, community leaders and elected officials at every level—to improve education for Vermont's students."

All told, the recovery act so far has pumped more than \$1.3 billion into Vermont, including tax cuts for virtually every taxpayer in the state. The stimulus program has created or saved more than 7,000 jobs in Vermont.