



# SENATOR HARRY REID, MAJORITY LEADER IMPROVING EDUCATION FOR ALL NEVADANS



*As someone whose life was transformed by education, Senator Reid understands the importance of providing all Nevadans the opportunity to receive a quality education. That is why Senator Reid has fought to provide resources for Nevada’s schools, colleges, and universities and worked to make higher education affordable and accessible for more Nevada students. Senator Reid remains committed to addressing Nevada’s high dropout rate, concerns with the No Child Left Behind Act, and ensuring that Nevada students are prepared for college or a career.*

**Senator Reid Secured Funding for Nevada’s Schools, Colleges and Universities During the Economic Downturn to Prevent Teacher Layoffs, Reduced Services, and Increased Tuition.** Last year, Senator Reid shepherded passage of the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* (Recovery Act), which provided nearly a half a billion dollars in funding directly to Nevada’s schools, colleges, and universities. These funds were responsible for saving several thousand educator jobs and creating hundreds more. They also helped prevent increased class sizes, a reduction in special education services, and the loss of other, essential school services.

[H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, 111-005]

**Senator Reid Led Passage of the Education Jobs Fund to Help States Avert Further Layoffs During the 2010-2011 School Year.** While the economy has shown signs of recovery, many states continue to face challenging budget situations. In fact, school districts in Nevada and all across the country faced the very real prospect of having to lay off thousands of teachers as the new school year began. Senator Reid led the Senate in passing legislation to help avert these layoffs by providing \$10 billion to assist states and local school districts retain or rehire teachers. As a result of this bill, Nevada schools received over \$80 million in assistance, which will help preserve as many as 1,400 teachers across our state. [H.R. 1586, Senate Vote 228, 08/05/10, P.L. 111-226]

## HIGHLIGHTS OF SENATOR REID’S RECORD

- ★ Senator Reid Secured Funding for Nevada’s Schools, Colleges and Universities During the Economic Downturn to Prevent Teacher Layoffs, Reduced Services, and Increased Tuition
- ★ Senator Reid Led Passage of the Education Jobs Fund, to Help States Avert Further Layoffs During the 2010-2011 School Year
- ★ Senator Reid Fought to Make College More Affordable for All Nevadans
- ★ Senator Reid Will Ensure that No Child Left Behind Reauthorization Works for Nevada’s Schools and Students
- ★ Senator Reid is Working to Address the Dropout Crisis
- ★ Senator Reid is Fighting to Innovate and Modernize Our Middle and High Schools
- ★ Senator Reid Worked to Bring Millions in Funding for Essential Programs in Nevada’s K-12 Schools
- ★ Senator Reid Has Secured Millions in Funding for Research Projects at Nevada’s Colleges and Universities
- ★ Senator Reid Championed Bipartisan Legislation to Improve Math and Science Education and Increase the Federal Commitment to Research
- ★ Senator Reid Led Passage of the National Service Bill
- ★ Senator Reid Helped Boost Funding for Special Education Services to the Highest Level Ever
- ★ Senator Reid Fought for Safe, Reliable Transportation for Rural School Children
- ★ Senator Reid Worked to Bring More Highly-Qualified Teachers to Nevada
- ★ Senator Reid Expanded Access to Quality Early Education Programs for More Nevada Children

**Senator Reid Fought to Make College More Affordable for All Nevadans.** As a college degree becomes more important for success in today's competitive global economy, the high cost has put higher education out of reach for too many, and strained the budgets of students and their families. Making college more affordable and accessible for Nevada's students has been one of Senator Reid's top legislative priorities.



- ***Senator Reid led the passage of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act and the Higher Education Opportunity Act.*** These bills cut student loan interest rates in half over five years, provided a significant increase to the Pell Grant, and simplified the federal financial aid form. They also encourage students to enter public service by providing loan forgiveness for borrowers who spend ten years in a public service occupation, such as teaching, law enforcement, military service, and social work. [H.R. 2669, Senate Vote 326, 09/07/07, P.L. 110-084; H.R. 4137, Senate Vote 194, 07/31/08, P.L. 110-315]
- ***Senator Reid guided the Recovery Act through Congress, which included important higher education provisions.*** The Recovery Act helped students and families struggling to pay for the cost of college or continuing education during these challenging economic times by expanding tax credits for higher education expenses with the American Opportunity Credit, which provides a tax credit of up to \$2,500 for tuition, fees, or textbooks. The Recovery Act also increased the maximum Pell Grant to \$5,350 for the 2009-10 school year. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, 111-005]
- ***Senator Reid helped lead the passage of the Health Care and Education Reconciliation Act.*** This legislation, which is now law, included a number of higher education provisions that will make a college education more affordable for Nevada students. It ended wasteful subsidies to banks to originate federal student loans, saving taxpayers more than \$60 billion over ten years. These savings were invested in a number of ways to help Nevada students, including [H.R. 4872, Senate Vote 105, 03/25/10, P.L. 111-152]:
  - An increase in the maximum Pell Grant from \$5,350 to \$5,550 for the 2010-2011 school year, and to \$5,975 by 2017. The bill also ensures that the Pell Grant will keep pace with the rising cost of college, with annual increases linked to the Consumer Price Index.
  - An estimated \$120 million in additional Pell Grant funding, helping nearly 3,000 more low- and moderate-income Nevada students afford a college education.
  - An additional \$8 million over the next five years for Nevada colleges and universities for default prevention, financial literacy and debt counseling, and other programs to retain and graduate more students.
  - Up to millions in competitive grant funding for Nevada community colleges to improve educational or career training programs.
  - Starting in 2014, college graduates in Nevada will be able to cap their loan payments at 10% of their net income, and have their student loans forgiven after 20 years of making payments.

**Senator Reid Will Ensure that No Child Left Behind Reauthorization Works for Nevada's Schools and Students.** The Senate and House education committees are currently working on ways to improve the *No Child Left Behind Act* – which is now referred to by its original name, the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*.

As the reauthorization process moves forward, Senator Reid will continue to work with Nevada's educators to make the law work better for our schools, teachers, and students.

**Senator Reid is Working to Address the Dropout Crisis.** In Nevada, nearly a third of students who enter the ninth grade do not graduate four years later. To say that this is a crisis is an understatement. Senator Reid introduced the *Graduation Promise Act*, which would create a fund to target the high schools across the country with graduation rates under 60 percent. These schools account for nearly half of all dropouts nationwide, and this legislation would help them implement effective dropout prevention strategies and interventions. Senator Reid has worked to include these provisions in the reauthorization of *No Child Left Behind*. [S. 1698, Introduced 09/23/09]

**Senator Reid is Fighting to Innovate and Modernize Our Middle and High Schools.** Last year, nearly 20,000 Nevada students did not graduate from high school – the lost lifetime earnings in Nevada for this class total over \$5 billion. Senator Reid has met with educators and school leaders from across Nevada to determine why so many students continue to drop out of school. Among the challenges identified were curriculum that often lacks relevance to students' lives, large and impersonal high schools, and a shortage of guidance counselors. To help address these challenges, Senator Reid introduced the *Secondary School Innovation Fund Act* to provide grants to encourage middle and high schools to find innovative ways to improve student achievement and increase the graduation rate. [S. 968, Introduced 05/04/09]

**Senator Reid Worked to Bring Millions in Funding for Essential Programs in Nevada's K-12 Schools.** While funding cannot solve all of the problems in education, in order to ensure that our students are ready to compete in today's economy, Nevada cannot continue to remain near the bottom in per pupil funding. To help make up for low levels of state support, Senator Reid has and will continue to secure federal funding to assist Nevada schools. In just the last few years, he has secured over \$20 million in funding for education technology, afterschool programs, gifted education, expanded math and science curriculum, charter schools, dropout prevention programs, school counselors, and other important needs in our K-12 schools. [H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L. 110-161; H.R. 3010, Unanimous Consent, 12/21/05, P.L. 109-149; H.R. 4818, Senate Vote 215, 11/20/04, P.L. 108-447; H.R. 2673, Senate Vote 3, 01/22/04, P.L. 108-199; H.J.RES. 2, Senate Vote 34, 02/13/03, P.L. 108-007]

**Senator Reid Has Secured Millions in Funding for Research at Nevada's Colleges and Universities.** Over the course of his career, Senator Reid has secured well over half a billion dollars for research and related activities at UNLV, UNR, the Desert Research Institute, and Nevada's community colleges. This includes renewable energy, medical, and science research that has created hundreds of jobs and led to growth of new industries. [H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008; H.R. 2764, Senate Vote 441, 12/18/07, P.L. 110-161; H.R. 3010, Unanimous Consent, 12/21/05, P.L. 109-149; H.R. 4818, Senate Vote 215, 11/20/04, P.L. 108-447; H.R. 2673, Senate Vote 3, 01/22/04, P.L. 108-199; H.J.RES. 2, Senate Vote 34, 02/13/03, P.L. 108-007]

**Senator Reid Championed Bipartisan Legislation to Improve Math and Science Education and Increase the Federal Commitment to Research.** We must ensure that Nevada and the nation's students and teachers are prepared to continue leading the world in innovation, research, and technology. Towards this end, during the 110<sup>th</sup> Congress Senator Reid helped lead passage of the *America COMPETES Act*, to improve math and science education and put the U.S. on a path to double investment in the major federal research agencies. [S. 761, Senate Vote 146, 04/25/07; H.R. 2272, Unanimous Consent, 08/02/07, P.L. 110-069]

**Senator Reid Led Passage the National Service Bill.** Senator Reid helped pass the *Serve America Act*, to incentivize Americans to serve their communities and help tackle many of the nation's serious challenges. The bipartisan bill builds on the success of the existing AmeriCorps program by more than tripling the number of volunteers and creates new programs that focus on education, health care, clean energy, and veterans. The bill raised the stipend for AmeriCorps volunteers to finally match the maximum Pell Grant and created fellowships available for people 55 and older, as well as summer positions for middle- and high-school students. In tribute to victims of the 2001 terrorist attacks, the legislation designated September 11<sup>th</sup> as a day of service and remembrance. [H.R. 1388, Senate Vote 115, 03/26/10, P.L. 111-013]

**Senator Reid Helped Boost Funding for Special Education Services to the Highest Level Ever.** Improving educational results for children with disabilities has been a top priority for Senator Reid. In 2004, Congress passed the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act*, which called for the federal government to provide 40 percent of the funding towards the cost of special education. After several years of a decreasing federal share, through the Recovery Act, Senator Reid helped ensure that the federal share of special education costs is at its highest level ever, and resulting in nearly \$75 million for special education programs in Nevada's schools. The Fiscal Year 2011 Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill included a nearly half billion dollar increase from last year and Senator Reid is committed to passing this important bill. [H.R. 1350, Unanimous Consent, 11/19/04, P.L. 108-446; H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, P.L. 111-005; S. 3686, Introduced 08/02/10]

**Senator Reid Fought for Safe, Reliable Transportation for Rural School Children.** Many rural school districts do not have safe and reliable buses and lack the resources to buy new buses or retrofit the ones they have. This leaves children no choice but to ride in outdated, unsafe buses. Senator Reid worked to bring federal funds in the form of grants and low-interest loans to Nevada to retrofit and replace outdated school buses across the state. Additionally, Senator Reid has introduced legislation to allow rural school districts to use federal transportation funds to purchase new buses and update their outdated buses. [S. 3590, Introduced 09/25/08]

**Senator Reid Worked to Bring More Highly-Qualified Teachers to Nevada.** Our children deserve great teachers in every classroom. As one of the fastest-growing states in the nation, Nevada has a tremendous need for additional qualified teachers. To address persistent teaching shortages:

- ***Senator Reid worked to bring Teach for America to Clark County.*** Senator Reid's leadership was essential in partnering Teach for America, a nonprofit group committed to educational equity, with the Clark County School District, which resulted in several hundred more highly-qualified teachers in the district.
- ***Senator Reid also fought for legislation to incentivize more college graduates to enter teaching.*** The *College Cost Reduction and Access Act* expanded loan forgiveness programs for graduates who spend 10 years in a public service profession, including teaching. One of the reasons many college graduates do not enter the teaching profession is because of high student loan debt. This legislation also established TEACH grants, which provide grants of \$4,000 per year for undergraduate students who commit to teaching in high-need school districts. [H.R. 2669, Senate Vote 326, 09/07/07, P.L. 110-084]
- ***Senator Reid also secured funding for teacher preparation programs to help address teacher shortages in Nevada's school districts.***
  - The *Recovery Act* included over \$100 million in grants, which will help Nevada address teacher shortages and provide new routes to teaching for jobless individuals looking to enter the teaching field. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, 111-005]

- Senator Reid included funding for distance education teacher programs to provide teachers in Nevada’s rural school districts greater access to teacher preparation and professional development programs. [H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008]

**Senator Reid Expanded Access to Quality Early Education Programs for More Nevada Children.** Senator Reid helped lead passage of the *Head Start for School Readiness Act*, to improve and expand Head Start and allow thousands more children to take advantage of this vital program. [H.R. 1429, Senate Vote 409, 11/14/07, P.L. 110-134]

- ***Senator Reid ensured that the Recovery Act included significant investments in early education programs.*** This resulted in nearly \$6.5 million for additional staff for Nevada’s Head Start and Early Head Start programs. [H.R. 1, Senate Vote 64, 02/13/09, 111-005]
- ***Senator Reid secured funding for Early Head Start and Head Start programs in Clark County.*** This funding helped expand early education programs to more low- and moderate-income Nevada children. [H.R. 3288, Senate Vote 374, 12/13/09, P.L. 111-117; H.R. 1105, Voice Vote, 03/10/09, P.L. 111-008]

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