

IN OKLAHOMA, THE TEACHERS AND FIRST RESPONDERS BACK TO WORK ACT WILL PROVIDE \$359.6 MILLION IN FUNDS TO SUPPORT UP TO 5,900 EDUCATOR JOBS

The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will save or create nearly 400,000 education jobs through critical investments in the education of our nation's children. Specifically, The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will invest \$30 billion to support state and local efforts to retain, rehire, and hire early childhood, elementary, and secondary educators. Facing a \$500 million projected budget shortfall in 2012, cuts to state and local spending on education will place thousands of Oklahoma teacher jobs at risk. The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will provide Oklahoma with an additional \$359.6 million in funds that will support 5,900 education jobs, provide a jolt to the state economy, and improve the quality of education. By asking millionaires to pay their fair share, The Teachers and First Responders Back to Work Act will grow the Oklahoma economy without adding a dime to the deficit.

Oklahoma Budget Shortfall Forced State To Slash Education Spending by 18.7 Percent. As a result of the most severe fiscal crisis since the Great Depression, Oklahoma faced a budget shortfall of \$500 million in 2012, a staggering 9% of the state's General Fund. Given the dramatic reduction in state revenue, the state was forced to slash funding for educational programs and services. In Oklahoma, elementary and high schools are currently receiving 18.7% less state funding this year than in 2008. [Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [6/17/11](#); Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, [10/7/11](#)]

Democrats Helped Oklahoma Avoid an Even Worse Situation, Preventing Thousands of Potential Layoffs. Without Democratic intervention in 2010, Oklahoma school districts would have been forced to lay off as many as 2,245 teachers. Recognizing the financial difficulty that many state and local governments were experiencing, Democrats shepherded the bipartisan Education Jobs Act into law, thereby protecting 2,400 education jobs in Oklahoma. Unfortunately, thousands of teacher jobs are still at stake today. [U.S. Department of Education analysis, [8/6/10](#); National Education Association, [5/10](#)]