



Support for the *Educators for America Act* and the *Building Community in America Act*

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"We need good men - mentors, leaders and role models - in our communities and in our classrooms. The best antidote to a bad man online is a good man in flesh and blood, in the lives of our boys. The declining share of men in K-12 teaching and in community organizations ought to be setting off alarm bells across the country. Sen. Kelly's bills represent a serious effort to address this problem, and are the first of their kind. It is easy to talk about the importance of male role models. These bills actually do something to promote them," **said Richard V. Reeves President, American Institute for Boys and Men.**

"At Boys to Men Tucson, we witness every day the transformative impact that caring, consistent adult mentors and positive male role models have on young people. Expanding opportunities for men to serve as educators, mentors, coaches, and community volunteers strengthens youth, supports healthier communities, and creates the connections that help young people thrive. We appreciate Senator Kelly's leadership in recognizing the importance of investing in relationships that build belonging, resilience, and opportunity for the next generation," **said Erica Smith, Chief Executive Officer, Boys to Men Tucson.**

"No single bill is going to solve the challenges facing our schools, our young people, or our communities. There is no one-size-fits-all answer. The Educators for America Act and the Building Community in America Act are thoughtful, practical steps that address two important pieces of a much larger puzzle. These bills are about expanding opportunity, not limiting it. They encourage more qualified people from underrepresented populations, including men, to consider careers in teaching and service at a time when our schools, mentoring programs, and communities need them most. They are not meant to be the final answer. Rather, they are part of a broader effort to strengthen the pipeline of educators, mentors, coaches, public servants, and skilled professionals who help shape the next generation. Combined with continued investments in teacher preparation, workforce development, family engagement, and strong community partnerships, these measures can help build stronger schools, safer neighborhoods, and brighter futures for all of our children," **said Warren Brown, Vice Western Regional Director, Phi Beta Sigma Fraternity.**



"Every day, I have the privilege of helping young men find guidance, purpose, and hope for the future. When boys are surrounded by strong mentors and a community rooted in faith, service, and compassion, they grow into better men, fathers, leaders, and neighbors. We appreciate Senator Kelly for recognizing the importance of mentorship and service, and we're grateful for his leadership on the Building Community in America Act. We look forward to continuing our work to strengthen families and our community," **said Pastor David L. Wade.**

"Lasting change happens when communities come together to invest in people. By encouraging more men to become teachers, mentors, and volunteers, Senator Kelly's legislation strengthens the relationships that help young people succeed and communities thrive. We are proud to support this effort to build a stronger future for Arizona's children and families," **said Carla Vargas Jasa, President and CEO of Valley of the Sun United Way.**

"Connection is one of the strongest protective factors a young person can have. As the father of four boys, I know how important it is for young people to have caring adults who model respect, responsibility, and service. We appreciate Senator Kelly's leadership in expanding opportunities for more men to become teachers, mentors, and volunteers and helping more young people build those meaningful relationships," **said Uziel Barrios, Director of Strategic Development at Amistades.**

"We can't build strong communities with struggling men. Fortunately we know how to fix this: more positive men in the lives of our boys. At a time when our boys need them the most, less and less men are volunteering. In our schools, the share of male educators has been consistently declining as males continue to fall further and further behind their female classmates. So Senator Kelly's bills are right on time. The bills also go hand in hand because service can be a pathway into teaching for so many men. We can fix what's wrong in our communities with what's right: men ready to serve," **said Curtis Valentine, founder and president of the Male Educator Network and Policy Institute.**

"Every student benefits from having access to a well-prepared teacher workforce. Paid teacher residency programs remove financial barriers that too often prevent talented individuals from entering the profession, while providing the intensive clinical preparation and mentorship that help new teachers succeed and stay in the classroom. By supporting high-quality teacher residencies and encouraging efforts to recruit more men, and other underserved populations, into teaching, the Educators for America Act strengthens the educator pipeline and expands opportunities for students to learn from well-prepared teachers," **said Kathlene Campbell, Ph.D. Chief Executive Officer at National Center for Teacher Residencies (NCTR).**

"In my job, I see the consequences when young people don't have the support they need. I also see what's possible when they do. That's why it's so important that we invest in teachers, mentors, and volunteers who can help boys build confidence, character, and a sense of responsibility. Senator Kelly's legislation strengthens those opportunities, and that's good for our schools, our communities, and the next generation," **said Ammon Barker, Coconino County Attorney.**

"Northern Arizona University applauds Senator Mark Kelly's leadership in advancing innovative solutions to strengthen America's educator workforce. As home to Arizona's nationally recognized Arizona Teacher Residency program, the state's only post-baccalaureate teacher residency program, we have seen firsthand that residency-based, earn-and-learn pathways can attract a broader and more diverse group of talented educators, including a higher proportion of men than is typical in the teaching force. Senator Kelly's Educators for America Act and Building Community in America Act emphasize the importance of creating meaningful, supported pathways into service and teaching," **said Dr. Victoria Theisen-Homer, Director of the Arizona Teacher Residency at Northern Arizona University.**

"Strong communities are built on strong relationships. At MENTOR, we know that when young people have trusted adults in their lives, they are more connected, more resilient, and better equipped to thrive. We appreciate Senator Kelly's leadership in advancing the Building Community in America Act and elevating the importance of investing in the relationships and community connections that strengthen our nation's social infrastructure," **said Jermaine Myrie, CEO, MENTOR.**

Click [here](#) to read MENTOR's full letter of support.



"In the world of public education, we often talk about the value of our students, especially our boys, having access to male teachers and educators because they can serve as "mirrors" and "windows" for our kids. "Mirrors" because they can see some part of their identity reflected in that of their male teacher and "windows" because through the life and trajectory of these teachers, these students can see where they want their future to take them. Senator Kelly's work is an exciting opportunity to provide more of these mirrors and windows for the young people of Arizona and across our nation," **said Robby Meldau, Principal, Eisenhower Center For Innovation.**

"Arizona's students benefit from a strong, diverse educator workforce, and with schools continuing to face teacher shortages, we support efforts to strengthen the educator pipeline by reducing barriers, expanding high-quality teacher residency programs, and encouraging more men to consider careers in education," **said Rebecca Beebe, Director of Governmental Affairs at Arizona School Administrators.**