



Duckworth, Durbin Applaud Biden Administration Decision To Reimburse Schools For COVID-Related Reopening Costs

January 22 2021 11:11 AM

WASHINGTON – U.S. Senators Tammy Duckworth (D-IL) and Dick Durbin (D-IL) applauded President Biden today for signing Executive Orders to strengthen the country’s COVID-19 response and help schools keep children and teachers safe. Today’s Executive Orders, in part, ensure that the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) reimburse COVID-related costs for schools that are necessary for reopening, such as personal protective equipment and cleaning supplies, through FEMA’s Disaster Relief Fund.

“Getting our kids back to school safely has been an incredibly difficult and expensive undertaking for education systems across Illinois, and I applaud President Biden for swiftly acting to ensure they can be reimbursed for pandemic-related costs and freeing up more resources around the country for helping educate our children, Duckworth said. “For much of the past year, Senator Durbin and I called on the Trump Administration to increase the federal cost share for FEMA Disaster Relief Funds, and I’m pleased to see the Biden Administration take this important action today to help keep all of our kids and teachers safe, no matter their zip code.”

“Reopening our schools is a huge step in getting life back to some sort of normal, but we must provide our schools the funding and resources they need to reopen as safely as possible. I’m glad the Biden Administration is taking this step to ensure school districts have the backing of the federal government when it comes to costs they’ve already incurred, and for future costs as we continue to work towards reopening our classrooms,” Durbin said.

Duckworth and Durbin have [continuously called](#) for an [increase](#) in the federal cost share for disaster assistance through FEMA, which the Trump Administration ignored. Typically, federal disaster funding requires a 25 percent state and local cost-sharing match, but FEMA is authorized to cover up to 100 percent of federal cost share for response and recovery costs. The Trump Administration only authorized a federal cost share of 75 percent, leaving state and local governments to pick up 25 percent of the overall costs of fighting COVID-19.

[Subscribe to our YouTube Channel](#)