



Friday, December 1, 2017

Dear CEF Members:

## I. Policy Intelligence and Education News

- **Higher Education Act reauthorization introduced today** – House Education and the Workforce Committee chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC) today introduced a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. [H.R. 4508](#), the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success, and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act, makes many changes to student loans, grants, and institutional requirements. The bill reflects the Republican goal of changing federal higher education assistance to a system of one grant, one loan, and one work-study program. Their summary materials are available [here](#). [We will try to arrange a conference call briefing with Committee staff for next week.](#)
- **Statutory Pay-As-You-Go-Act (SPAYGO) implications of tax reform** – As I write this, the Senate has not yet passed tax reform legislation, but many have raised concern that SPAYGO would trigger a big sequester of mandatory spending to offset the bill's deficit impact. As spelled out in the CEF Update of November 16, such a sequester would result in huge cuts – or elimination of – the direct spending programs it would hit. In the past, when Congress passes a bill that would trigger a large SPAYGO sequester, it includes a provision turning off the automatic trigger. Senator Susan Collins (R-ME) has been vocal about the implications of the sequester, and [Politico reported last night](#) that she said:

she received a personal assurance from Majority Leader Mitch McConnell on Wednesday that the cuts would be waived — one day after she threatened to oppose the bill over the severe reductions. She said House Speaker Paul Ryan had made the same promise.

[“I am confident that neither side of the aisle wants that to occur,” Collins said Thursday morning at an event hosted by the Christian Science Monitor, adding that GOP leaders will likely strike a year-end deal to waive the pay-as-you-go requirement.](#)

- **No solution yet for FY 2018 appropriations** – In September Congress extended government funding at fiscal year (FY) 2017 levels until December 8, but we're one week away from that deadline with no clear solution in sight. Congress will not be ready to pass year-long funding by next week, and there are many issues that will impact what Congress does, including what happens with tax reform, the need to agree to a budget deal to raise the defense and non-defense discretionary caps for at least FY 2018, the need to pass emergency disaster relief, the need to extend CHIP, and Democrats' insistence on addressing DREAMers before the end of the year. There seem to be two possible options for next week:

1. **Congress passes another short-term extension of current funding** – a continuing resolution – providing more time to work out a deal to raise spending caps and create an omnibus appropriations bill with year-long funding levels reflecting the higher spending. The question is whether this CR would be for two weeks, or if it lasts into January. Defense hawks want funding settled quickly, which argues for a two-week CR, and then another CR that has a budget deal by December 22. Conservatives don't want a two-week deadline for fear that a rush to leave for the holidays will make Congress more likely to give into requests for higher funding.
2. **There's no agreement, and the government shuts down on December 9** until Congress chooses a path forward.

## II. Advocacy

- **Twitterstorm to #RaiseTheCaps to increase #edfunding** – Please join CEF's Twitterstorm on Tuesday, Dec. 5, from 10:30-11:30am ET to encourage Congress to raise the non-defense discretionary cap and then allocate more funding for education investments in the final fiscal year 2018 appropriations bill. See the attached Advocacy Toolkit for sample tweets, links to chats and fact sheets, and a sample letter to Congress.

## III. CEF Activities

- **CEF's upcoming schedule –**
  - **Friday, Dec. 8, 9-11am:** At Georgetown University Law Center near Union Station, 600 NJ Ave, NW, Room 200 McDonough Hall. Guest Speaker: Steve Townsend, Senate Budget Committee Republican staff.
  - **Friday, Dec. 15, 9-noon: CEF ANNUAL MEETING.** At University of California, 1608 Rhode Island Ave, NW, 1<sup>st</sup> floor auditorium.

**Attendance is vital – we will have elections for CEF's 2018 Board and vote on CEF's 2018 budget.** We also have two excellent guest speakers to provide a bipartisan overview of the budget and appropriations action at the end of the year and the implications going forward. The experts on budget policy, procedure, and the economy are:

- [Bill Hoagland](#), Senior Vice President at the Bipartisan Policy Center, a Senate budget guru who worked for 21 years for the Senate Budget Committee Republican staff, in addition to positions at the Congressional Budget Office and the executive branch.
- [Aaron Klein](#), Fellow in Economic Studies at the Brookings Institution and Policy Director of its Center on Regulations and Markets, who previously served as Deputy Assistant Secretary at the Treasury Department and also as Chief Economist for the Senate Banking Committee Democratic staff.

And of course, we'll provide CEF's traditional annual meeting hot breakfast as a bonus!

My best,

Sheryl

Sheryl V. Cohen, Executive Director



COMMITTEE FOR  
EDUCATION FUNDING

1800 M Street, NW  
Suite 500 South  
Washington, DC 20036  
T: 202-327-8125  
[cohen@cef.org](mailto:cohen@cef.org)  
[www.cef.org](http://www.cef.org)



## Advocacy Toolkit for Twitterstorm on December 5, 2017

**What:** Twitterstorm to #RaiseTheCaps to increase #edfunding.

CEF is urging Congress to raise the non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending cap and increase education funding in fiscal year 2018 appropriations.

**When:** Tuesday, December 5, 2017 from 10:30-11:30a.m. ED

Below are sample tweets and a sample letter, as well as links to fact sheets and charts you can use.

### Sample tweets

- Federal investment in education is almost \$1 billion less than in 2010, excl. Pell grants. Congress must #RaiseTheCaps to increase #edfunding
- Congress is poised to cut #edfunding, which is only 2% of fed budget. Ask Congress to invest in ed – fact sheets & sample letter at [cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/](http://cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/)
- Tell Congress to #RaiseTheCaps and make #edfunding a priority! Sample letter & fact sheets at [cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/](http://cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/)
- Congress is deciding the 2018 budget – ask your Rep/Sen to #RaiseTheCaps to increase #edfunding. Sample letter & info at [cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/](http://cef.org/advocacy/how-you-can-help/)
- Congress needs to increase #edfunding in FY2018 appropriations -longer term goal is to reach 5% of budget

**Charts available to tweet** (scroll to “2017 Advocacy Toolkit charts” for tweetable versions)

- 2018 Education Funding Far Below 2010 Level Excluding Pell Grants
- Education Funding Bill Cut the Most in 2018
- Education Accounts for Just 2% of All Federal Spending
- Non-Defense Discretionary Levels

### Fact sheets

- [“5 Cents Makes Sense”](#) campaign to increase education investment to 5% of the federal budget
- [Why](#) we need a larger federal investment in education
- [Myth v Fact](#) on education funding

*(continued on next page)*

**Sample Letter to Congress** (you can find your representative [here](#) and your senators [here](#))

[date]

Dear Senator/Representative [name]:

As one of your constituents, I am writing to urge you to repeal the non-defense sequester-level spending caps and match any increases in defense spending with equal increases in non-defense spending. Congress needs to act quickly to pass a budget deal that accommodates necessary investments, including significantly increasing vital federal investments in education for fiscal year 2018 and beyond. This education funding not only provides opportunities and needed services for students, their families, and schools; it also strengthens our economy and nation.

Individual success and the nation's economic strength are inextricably tied to educational attainment. For instance, students who graduate from college earn more and have lower unemployment rates than individuals with just a high school degree. In addition, every one dollar invested in early childhood education saves at least seven dollars in later societal costs. Overall, countries with higher educational achievement have greater economic growth. Despite these proven benefits of investing in education, education funding accounts for merely two percent of the federal budget. I encourage you to work towards increasing the share of the budget devoted to education to five percent of the federal budget, and to reject the education cuts in the 2018 appropriations proposals.

I and your other constituents are counting on strong federal education investments to ensure access to high quality education from pre-school to higher education. These vital investments also fill gaps where local and state funding is insufficient, and help with the costs of federally mandated services, such as special education. By eliminating sequester caps and increasing education funding, Congress can help improve student achievement and our nation's economic strength. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

[Your name]