



The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Norm Dicks
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Senate Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Subcommittee

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Ranking Member
Senate Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Subcommittee

The Honorable Denny Rehberg
Chairman
House Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Subcommittee

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Subcommittee

November 4, 2011

Dear Chairmen and Ranking Members:

The Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce, the Coalition for Health Funding and the Committee for Education Funding, representing the workforce investment, health and education communities, are jointly writing to urge you to recognize health, education, job training, children's and social services programs as critical national priorities by providing the largest possible 302(b) conference allocation for the Fiscal Year 2012 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. The allocation should be consistent with the aggregate discretionary appropriation level of \$1.043 trillion included in the Budget Control Act (BCA).

Additional investment in these domestic programs will boost the economy and reduce the deficit through prevention of costly chronic diseases, increased earnings, and reduced expenditures for unemployment and other social service programs.

The FY 2012 bill as approved by the Senate Appropriations Committee has a discretionary allocation (including cap adjustments) of \$158.027 billion. The draft House proposal released by

Chairmen Rogers and Rehberg, by contrast has a comparable allocation of \$153.414 billion, a level that is \$4.613 billion below the Senate.

The gap is even larger based on program levels. The Senate level is \$165.384 billion while the level in the House draft is \$160.203 billion, \$5.181 billion below the Senate Appropriations Committee bill. Compared to the FY 11 program level, the House proposal reduces funding by \$5.08 billion.

Some education and health programs have higher levels in the Senate bill than the House draft, while others are funded at higher levels in the House draft than the Senate bill. Workforce programs are funded at significantly lower levels in the House draft and could lead to the dismantling of key programs as early as January 2013. By providing the largest possible conference allocation, the Committees can avoid harmful cuts to these programs and incorporate many of the needed investments provided in each bill.

Health, education, job training, children's and social services programs are continually asked to do more with less. These domestic programs have experienced significant erosion over the past several years despite their important role in keeping Americans healthy, productive, competitive, and secure.

As a result, America's status as a global leader has been compromised. According to international data collected by the Central Intelligence Agency in 2011 the United States ranks 47th in infant mortality - widely recognized as a basic indicator of a country's overall health - behind even some developing countries. America is also falling behind our industrialized counterparts in academic achievement. Scores from the 2009 Program for International Student Assessment showed that U.S. 15-year-olds ranked 20th in science and 30th in math. Our nation still faces large and unacceptable gaps by race and socioeconomic status in student achievement, high school graduation and college attendance and completion rates. Despite a nine percent unemployment rate, our nation's businesses are struggling to find the skilled workers they need to sustain economic recovery, as a recent Manpower survey found 52 percent of U.S. employers are experiencing difficulty filling critical positions within their organizations - up from 14 percent in 2010.

Many of these critical education, health and workforce training programs were already cut in the Fiscal Year 2011 Continuing Resolution and will likely be further squeezed by the BCA caps, which reduce discretionary spending by \$900 billion over ten years.

We urge you to set a final 302(b) conference allocation to the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill that recognizes the value of health, education, job training, children's and social services in improving the lives of American families and strengthening our nation's global position. These programs should be protected from further cuts that would have profound consequences on our nation's global competitiveness and our capacity to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

If you have questions about this letter, please contact Emily Holubowich, Executive Director, Coalition for Health Funding (Eholubowich@dc-crd.com or 202-484-1100), Joel Packer,

Executive Director, Committee for Education Funding (JPacker@cef.org or 202-383-0083) or Rachel Gragg, Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org or 202-223-8991).

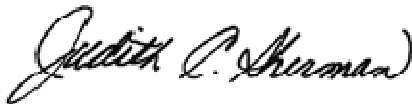
Sincerely,



Abbie Evans
President
Committee for Education Funding



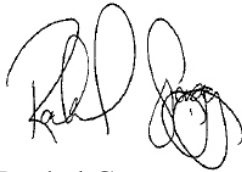
Joel Packer
Executive Director
Committee for Education funding



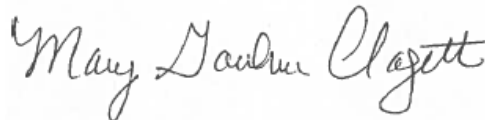
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Cc: Members, House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittees