



“Raise the Caps” Toolkit for Education Programs

General Overview of the Appropriations Caps and Sequestration

- While total non-defense appropriations will increase slightly in 2016 even if sequestration is fully implemented, that increase will fall far short of what would be needed just to keep up with inflation or address high-priority needs, let alone make up for any of ground lost over the past several years.
- The Budget Control Act of 2011, which established the appropriations caps and sequestration, specifies that sequestration cuts in 2014 and all subsequent years are to be implemented by reducing the caps that would otherwise apply (rather than by across-the-board cuts as in 2013). For 2016, the pre-sequestration caps were scheduled to increase by 1.9 percent, but sequestration will eliminate almost all of that increase.
- Without sequestration relief, the cap on non-defense appropriations for 2016 will be just *0.2 percent* (\$1.1 billion) above the 2015 level. That's \$8.6 billion *less* than what would be needed just to keep up with even the modest level of expected inflation. The defense situation is similar: an increase of just 0.3 percent or \$1.8 billion.
- With the spending caps essentially flat, 2016 will be the *sixth* year of austerity in non-defense appropriations. In four of the previous five years, the total has either decreased in actual dollar terms or increased only slightly.
- By 2016 the cumulative effect will be substantial. When adjusted just for general inflation, the 2016 cap on non-defense appropriations will be *17 percent* (or \$103 billion) below the 2010 level. The cumulative reduction in defense appropriations is only a little smaller: 15 percent or \$94 billion. These are, of course, only averages. Within both categories some things have been cut considerably less and other things considerably more.
- The effects of the caps and sequestration are even more dramatic when measured relative to the size of the economy. Outlays for non-defense appropriated programs are projected to be 3.1 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) in 2016—equal to the lowest percentage recorded at any point since 1962, which is as far back as data go on this basis. With the caps and sequestration fully in place, the percentage is expected to then set a *new* record low in 2017 and to continue dropping in subsequent years.
- One result of these limits is that increases even for high-priority needs become difficult to accomplish, as almost any increases require offsetting cuts or savings. After five previous years of cutting, feasible and acceptable cuts are getting harder and harder to find. And even for things that haven't been cut in dollar terms, the cumulative erosion of purchasing power is growing.

Appropriations Caps and Sequestration as it Affects Education Programs:

- Sequestration cuts resulted in a loss of \$22.54 million from Individuals with Disabilities Act's Part C program, which serves infants and toddlers with disabilities. Because of mounting fiscal pressure over the last two decades, States have narrowed the eligibility requirements for this voluntary program and any funding reduction means fewer children served.
- Last fall, Congress passed the reauthorization of the Child Care Development Block Grant (CCDBG), which provides needy families across the country with child care services. Currently, sequestration levels mean that CCDBG provides services to about 1 in 10 eligible children. However, with the additional requirements brought about by this bill, even fewer eligible children will be able to receive these services unless the sequestration caps are lifted.
- Due to 5.27 percent cut in funding thanks to sequestration, Head Start, the federal pre-K education service for low-income families, was forced to eliminate services for 57,000 children last fall. HHS data says that Head Start will have administered 1.3 million fewer days of service nationwide because of sequestration cuts.
- Sequestration could de-fund preschool programs in 18 states, causing 60,000 children to lose access to preschool entirely
- The federal share of discretionary spending dedicated to children has dropped by 7.2 percent since 2010, accounting for inflation the discretionary spending on children d has decreased by 11.6 percent (First Focus: Children's Budget 2015)
- Federal education programs have been cut by more than \$80 billion since 2010 with the elimination of more than 50 education programs
- Unless the cap on non-defense appropriations is raised, it will be virtually impossible for Congress to approve important increases in the President's budget such as
 - \$1.5 billion to expand Head Start for low-income children;
 - A \$1 billion increase for Title I education funds to improve services for students in high-poverty schools;
 - \$1.8 billion over the 2015 level for the Housing Choice Voucher program to expand access for affordable housing; and
 - New investments in research and development throughout the government (including additional funding of \$1 billion for the National Institutes of Health and \$379 million for the National Science Foundation).
- Discretionary funding for education programs—excluding Pell grants—has been cut by over \$3.714 billion since FY 2010 and non-Pell grant funding for the Department of Education is below FY 2008

- The suggested level of nondefense appropriations for FY 2016 is similar to the amount appropriated in FY 2006, when adjusted for inflation, despite that there has been a consistent rise in enrollments of children attending K-12 public schools and institutions of higher education coupled with the increase of more low-income children attending school since FY 2006 ([link](#))
- Federal funding for Title 1 of ESEA—the major federal assistance program for high-poverty schools—is down 12% since 2010, after adjusting for inflation, and funding for education for students with disabilities is down 11%.
- Sequestration resulted in approximately \$579 million in federal funding cuts to IDEA special education services for children ages 3 to 21.
- Congress has never lived up to its commitment to cover 40% of the average per pupil expenditure for special education. After sequestration, Congress is only meeting 14% of the cost to educate students with disabilities, the lowest level since 2001.
- Both the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bills cut funding for Pell grants, which will likely jeopardize the maximum award starting in Fiscal Year 2017. The Senate bill also cuts Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and Federal Work Study.
- Since Fiscal Year 2011, funding for student financial programs have been cut by \$75 billion.

Twitter

Sample Tweets to Use After September 10th:

- We need to invest in education, public safety, medical research, & infrastructure [insert member twitter handle]. #RaiseTheCaps
- Our economy depends on increasing fed funding for education. We need to #RaiseTheCaps in order to create opportunities for every child
- #EduCutsDontHeal. Investment in education matters and the time to act is now. #RaiseTheCaps
- .[insert member twitter handle], over 2,500 groups want you to #RaiseTheCaps for discretionary investments!
- National #security means investing in kids, education, public health, & infrastructure. [insert member twitter handle] make sure to #RaiseTheCaps!
- A secure #America needs more than #military might! [insert member twitter handle] make sure there to #RaiseTheCaps for #education!
- Our government spends less on NDD programs & is the lowest share of the economy since the Eisenhower Admin #RaiseTheCaps
- .(MOC), don't put your own interests ahead of America's children. Raise the spending caps so we can better fund our #Education programs
- US population has grown over the last decade, esp. in school enrollment, but our spending on education has NOT. #RaiseTheCaps
- Tell your Congressman to vote to #RaisetheCaps today. Our children's #education shouldn't be a political chess game.
- Continued sequestration could de-fund preschool programs in 18 states, causing 60K children to lose access to preschool entirely <Image 1>
- Fed #education programs have been cut by \$80+ billion since 2010, eliminating 50+ education programs #RaiseTheCaps <IMAGE 2>
- 50+ education programs have been eliminated since 2010. It's time to #RaiseTheCaps <Image 3>

- Since FY 2011, funding for student financial programs have been cut by \$75 billion. Time to #RaiseTheCaps <Image 4>

Twitter Hashtags and Handles:

- #RaiseTheCaps
- #Education
- #EduCutsDontHeal
- @edfunding

Images:

1.

#EduCutsDontHeal #RaiseTheCaps

Continued sequester =
60,000 *fewer* children with
access to pre-school

Sequestration could de-fund preschool
programs in 18 states, causing 60,000 children to lose access to pre-
school entirely

2.

#EduCutsDontHeal #RaisetheCaps

\$80 BILLION

= cuts to federal education
programs since 2010

Federal education programs have been cut by more than \$80 billion
since 2010 with the elimination of more than 50 education programs

3.

#EduCutsDontHeal

#RaisetheCaps

50+ Education Programs

have been cut since 2010

Federal education programs have been cut by more than \$80 billion since 2010 with the elimination of more than 50 education programs

4.

#EduCutsDontHeal

#RaisetheCaps

\$75 BILLION

= cuts to student financial programs
since FY 2011

Since FY 2011, funding for student financial programs have been cut by \$75 billion.