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February 12, 2016

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The Committee for Education Funding Pleased the President's Budget Invests in Education Despite Constrained Fiscal Environment

Disappointed in Proposed Freeze for Many Key Programs

WASHINGTON - The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 124 national education associations and institutions from preschool to postgraduate education, is pleased that President Obama's Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 budget continues to invest in education, despite the very constrained fiscal environment, due to the FY 2017 freeze for nondefense discretionary programs.

The Budget increases funding for the Department of Education by \$1.3 billion. In addition, early learning programs in the Department of Health and Human Services, including Preschool Development grants, Head Start and the Child Care and Development Block Grant, would receive a combined increase of \$734 million.

Makese Motley, President of CEF said, "We are deeply disappointed that the budget freezes funding for key foundational education programs including IDEA state grants, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) Title II Supporting Effective Instruction, Impact Aid, Rural Education, Career and Technical Education State grants, Adult Education State grants, Federal Supplemental Educational opportunity grants, Federal Work Study, TRIO, GEAR UP, aid to HBCUs, HSIs, and other minority-serving institutions."

CEF also pointed out that while Title I funding is proposed to increase by \$450 million, in reality that is a freeze at the combined FY 2016 level for Title I and School Improvement Grants (SIG). The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) absorbed SIG into Title I and increased the school improvement set-aside from 4% to 7%. Thus, \$200 million will be cut from school district allocations, resulting in many school districts receiving a smaller initial Title I allocation than they did in FY 2016.

CEF also noted that while the Student Support and Academic Enrichment grants created in ESSA is funded above the combined FY 2016 appropriation level of programs that were consolidated into it, its proposed funding is less than one-third of its \$1.65 billion authorized level that was established in that bipartisan bill, even though the activities under the new block grant are far broader than those funded under the programs that were absorbed into it.

CEF is pleased that some currently authorized programs received modest increases, including education for homeless children, Promise Neighborhoods, Education Innovation and Research, school leaders, magnet schools, IDEA preschool and infants/families, and research and statistics. In addition, the Budget proposes \$139 billion in new mandatory funding over ten years for programs such as Preschool for All, Computer Science for All, and America's College Promise.

At the higher education level, CEF supports the proposed expanded eligibility for Pell grants through the proposed Pell for Accelerated Completion, the Pell bonus, and other improvements.

CEF is strongly opposed to the proposed cuts to 21st Century Community Learning Centers, Impact Aid payments for federal property, International education, Library Services State grants, and the elimination of Teacher Quality Partnerships.

“We are fully supportive of the president’s plan to finally eliminate the harmful sequester caps and cuts in Fiscal Year 2018 and beyond, that make it extremely difficult to provide needed investments in education and related programs,” **CEF Executive Director Joel Packer** noted.

“CEF looks forward to working with Congress on a bipartisan basis to ensure that key education programs receive the increases desperately needed to help ensure that all students come to school ready to learn, close achievement gaps, improve overall student achievement, and increase high school graduation, college access, and college completion rates,” said **Motley**. “When our students succeed our nation succeeds.”

About the Committee for Education Funding

Founded in 1969, the Committee for Education Funding (CEF) and its 100+ member organizations have worked toward the common goal of maximizing federal support for our nation’s education system. Nonpartisan and nonprofit, CEF is America’s largest education coalition, reflecting the broad spectrum of the education community.