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September 9, 2016

Dear Member of Congress:

On behalf of the Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 117 national education associations and institutions spanning early learning to postgraduate education, we urge you to quickly pass a short-term continuing resolution before the fiscal year ends on September 30. It is vital to take action to prevent a government shutdown, but then Congress must quickly pass full-year appropriations legislation that provides needed investments in education. A continuing resolution that goes beyond December would abdicate Congress's responsibility to make program-by-program decisions to ensure that high-priority and effective federal programs are adequately funded.

We recognize the challenge of passing funding bills given the tight spending caps for fiscal year 2017, which is why CEF continues to strongly urge Congress to eliminate the austerity-level discretionary caps. However, education programs and other federal services need the certainty of knowing their funding level as they plan for and meet national needs. A long-term continuing resolution would deny students, schools and colleges the opportunity to benefit from any targeted funding increases.

Education funding, though only 2 percent of the federal budget, has been a target of deep cuts since January 2011. On the discretionary side of the budget, funding for programs exclusive of Pell grants for fiscal year 2016 is \$1.3 billion below the level provided for fiscal year 2010. Congress has already eliminated 50 education programs during that period, focusing the remaining funding on programs of high need.

Educational attainment is strongly tied to both individual success and the nation's economic strength. We urge Congress to continue working to advance

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the resources necessary to implement the best possible opportunities for students, their families, and our nation, and to finalize appropriations for fiscal year 2017 as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



Makese Motley
President



Sheryl Cohen
Executive Director