COMMITTEE FOR EDUCATION FUNDING

February 9, 2015

The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
House Education and the Workforce Committee
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
House Education and the Workforce Committee
2101 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Scott:

The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 115 national education associations and institutions representing early learning to postgraduate education, writes to express our strong opposition to the authorization levels contained in HR 5, the Student Success Act. While CEF as a coalition is not taking a position on the policy issues in HR 5, **we oppose the authorization levels because they would freeze funding in the aggregate for programs authorized in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) through the 2021-22 school year.**

HR 5 freezes the aggregate ESEA authorization level for Fiscal Year (FY) 2016 and for each of the succeeding five years at the aggregate FY 2015 appropriated level of $23.30 billion. Not only will this prevent needed investments for critical programs for the next six years, but it cuts funding below the FY 2012 pre-sequester level of $24.11 billion (a cut of 3.36 percent). Doing so locks in over $800 million in cuts to these programs compared to the FY 12 level.

Since the National Center for Education Statistics projects that public school enrollment will increase by more than 2.2 million students in this period and the Congressional Budget Office projects an aggregate increase in the CPI of 14.2 percent between 2015 and 2021, such a freeze would severely erode the purchasing power of these programs and significantly reduce services to students.

When factoring in cuts to ESEA programs that were enacted in FY 2011 and 2012, HR 5 locks in almost $1.7 billion in cuts compared to the FY 2010 appropriated level.

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These cuts have come at a time when enrollments have increased, more children are living in poverty and schools and students have endured deep state and local budget cuts.

Instead of making it more difficult to improve overall student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase high school graduation and college access rates by locking in these drastic cuts, Congress should be investing in our future through education. The need to increase the federal investment in education has never been greater. Jobs and the economy are directly linked to such investments. Both unemployment rates and lifetime earnings are based on levels of education attainment.

We urge you to reject the authorization levels contained in HR 5 and instead raise them to at least the FY 2010 level.

Sincerely,

Noelle Ellerson
President

Joel Packer
Executive Director

Cc: Members, Education and the Workforce Committee