



Friday, March 1, 2019

I. Advocacy

- **Sign-on letter with other coalitions** – CEF, in conjunction with the Coalition for Health Funding, Coalition on Human Needs, and Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce, is circulating our annual [sign-on letter](#) to secure a strong funding allocation for the House and Senate Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittees (draft attached, and text included below). We urge all CEF members to consider signing the letter and to share it with your networks. This letter about the Subcommittee's 302(b) allocation is an excellent opportunity to show lawmakers the strength of support for The People's Bill," which provides virtually all federal education funding.

TO SIGN, CLICK HERE BY COB MARCH 15, 2019

(Please note that in the interest of expediency, and as a courtesy to the hundreds or organizations that will sign, we will not accept editorial changes to the letter. Signers must agree to sign the letter "as is.")

- **FAQs on the advocacy effort** – Below are some frequently asked questions about the letter that you could use to help build support for the letter within your organization and throughout the community.

What is the 302(b) letter? The 302(b) allocation is the amount of funding the House and Senate Appropriations Committees provide to each of their 12 subcommittees. The subcommittees then divvy up the funding between the agencies and programs within their respective jurisdictions. Each year, CEF, the Coalition for Health Funding, Coalition on Human Needs, and Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce partner to circulate a letter throughout our respective communities in support of strong 302(b) allocations for the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations Subcommittees. The bigger the allocations, the better our chances of securing funding for these agencies and programs and preventing further program cuts.

Why are you circulating the letter now? We understand that the House and Senate Appropriations Committees may move quickly to set the 302(b) allocations for the subcommittees and begin markups—in the House, as early as April. Time is of the essence.

Our goal is to secure 1,000+ signatories across our communities so we may have a meaningful impact on these decisions.

Why should my organization sign the letter? Without a strong 302(b) allocation for the Labor-HHS-Education bill, there is little chance of increasing funding for education priorities. And there is an even greater likelihood that your priorities will be cut. So organizations and entities that care about federal funding for education and other programs, projects, and activities within the Labor-HHS-Education bill should sign this letter.

What happens once my organization signs? All signatures will be added to the letter and sent to the House and Senate Appropriations Committees the last week in March. We will forward you a copy of the letter for your records. A copy will also be posted on the CEF website: www.cef.org.

What can I do to help with this effort? Sign on, of course and/or forward this message and letter far and wide. We are accepting signatures from national, state, and local organizations, institutions, businesses, companies, etc., but not individuals.

[TO SIGN, CLICK HERE BY COB MARCH 15, 2019](#)

- **Text of the letter follows:**

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Vice Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The *** undersigned organizations—representing the full range of stakeholders supporting the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill (Labor-HHS)—urge you to significantly boost the fiscal year (FY) 2020 allocation for that Subcommittee to address vital and long-neglected needs. The programs and services funded by the Labor-HHS-Education Subcommittee have a profound impact on health and well-being, child development, educational and skills attainment, and productivity, yet they have been overlooked in the appropriations process over the last decade. Even in years when non-defense discretionary funding increased, the Subcommittee’s allocation remained flat or received only a small share of the increase. Most recently, for FY 2019 the bill received just a 0.6 percent increase in funding even though overall non-defense discretionary funding increased by 3 percent, shortchanging important services and activities by billions of dollars.

To provide workable allocations for the FY 2020 appropriations bills, Congress will need to raise the cap on non-defense discretionary spending substantially above the FY 2019 level both to support ongoing services across the government and to accommodate the increased cost of the decennial census and the VA Choice program. We urge you to take that opportunity to address the long-standing needs of the Labor-HHS-Education bill, whose programs strengthen the nation by improving Americans’ lives and meeting basic needs for a broad range of constituencies. The bill has lost almost \$16 billion in purchasing power over the last decade; it would take an allocation of \$194 billion just to return to the FY 2010 level in inflation-adjusted dollars.

The effects of chronic underfunding for the Labor-HHS-Education bill has impacted programs that support education, public health, health research, job training, and social services. The effects include:

- Serving 1.5 million fewer low-income people through the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) in 2018 than in 2010, despite growing need, because funding was reduced from \$5.1 billion to \$3.7 billion over this period.
- Eroding the public health infrastructure and workforce, limiting our ability to respond to public health crises and monitor health trends for new and emerging threats.
- Hindering efforts to raise overall student achievement, close troubling achievement gaps, and increase high school graduation rates, college affordability, and college completion.
- Leaving far too many low-income children without access to high quality preschool and other early learning opportunities.

- Hindering efforts of our local employers to fill the approximately six million open jobs in the U.S. because too many workers lack the necessary postsecondary education and credentials to fill these positions.
- Preventing almost one million citizens from accessing the critical workforce and job training services that Congress overwhelmingly authorized last year.
- Ignoring the needs of individuals who find themselves without a high school credential and who need a pathway back to education, employment and active citizenship.

Without a substantial increase in the Subcommittee's allocation, it will be virtually impossible to meaningfully expand investments in important initiatives—such as public health emergency preparedness and infectious disease surveillance, implementing the bipartisan Every Student Succeeds Act, continuing to improve college affordability and completion, or achieving the intended innovation of the bipartisan Workforce Innovation and Opportunities Act (WIOA)—without deep cuts in other equally important initiatives.

We urge you to commit to improving the lives of Americans by significantly raising the cap on non-defense discretionary spending above the FY 2019 level and then boosting the allocation for the Labor-HHS-Education bill for FY 2020 to support needed services to the American public.

If you have questions about this letter, please contact:

- Sheryl Cohen, Committee for Education Funding (cohen@cef.org)
- Emily Holubowich, Coalition for Health Funding (eholubowich@dc-crd.com);
- Katie Spiker, Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (KatieS@nationalskillscoalition.org); or
- Debbie Weinstein, Coalition on Human Needs (dweinstein@chn.org)

-Sarah

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Sincerely,

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