



June 21, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski  
Chairwoman  
U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee

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Dear Chairwoman Mikulski:

NDD United—a group of more than 3,200 national, state and local organizations working together to strengthen America and preserve nondefense discretionary (NDD) investments—is pleased the Senate Appropriations Committee’s FY 2014 302(b) allocations reflect the \$1.058 trillion discretionary cap established by the bipartisan Budget Control Act. We especially appreciate efforts to preserve funding of core NDD functions, including medical and scientific research; education and job training; infrastructure; public safety and law enforcement; public health; weather monitoring and environmental protection; natural and cultural resources; housing and social services; and international relations.

Evidence abounds that these critical domestic programs are not the root of our fiscal challenges, and we are encouraged that during this time of austerity the Senate will move forward with its spending bills at levels that may prevent further erosion. Nevertheless, these efforts will be for naught if Congress does not work together to replace sequestration with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. In this regard, we are troubled by the partisan nature of the Committee’s vote for two reasons:

1. There remains a fundamental lack of *understanding* about discretionary programs, both the value they provide in helping Americans lead healthy, safe, and productive lives; and
2. There remains a fundamental lack of *willingness* to work across-the-aisle to address our fiscal challenges in a meaningful way—by replacing sequestration and addressing the true drivers of the debt. Indeed, it seems the parties and chambers could not be farther apart.

The full breadth of sequestration’s devastation is becoming more visible as cuts to grants and contracts take hold: opportunities in medical research lost; public defenders furloughed; national parks closed; lab capacity to track outbreaks diminished; teachers fired.

Sequestration by design cuts deeply and indiscriminately. Both parties agree it was never meant to happen. Yet, it’s happening. And it will keep happening until Congress and the administration work together to replace sequestration with a balanced approach to deficit reduction. We implore you to put partisan politics aside and fix sequestration, once and for all.

For more information about NDD United, please contact co-chairs Emily Holubowich, Coalition for Health Funding ([eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com)), Joel Packer, Committee for Education Funding ([jpacker@rabengroup.com](mailto:jpacker@rabengroup.com)), or Rachel Gragg, National Skills Coalition ([rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org](mailto:rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org)).

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STRENGTHEN AMERICA

