



COALITION *for*
HEALTH FUNDING



April 20, 2015

The Honorable Harold Rogers
Chairman, Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

We are writing on behalf of more than 670 health, research, education, child development, aging, social services, and workforce development organizations to express our disappointment in the proposed fiscal year (FY) 2016 302(b) allocation for the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations (Labor-HHS) bill. These national, state, and local organizations join together in calling for a restoration of the Labor-HHS allocation to at least the FY 2010 level of \$163.6 billion (see attached).

We understand that the House Appropriations Committee faces significant fiscal constraints under the essentially flat, sequester level nondefense discretionary (NDD) cap. It is nonetheless extremely troubling that the proposed Labor-HHS allocation is 2.4 percent (\$3.7 billion) less than the FY 2015 level, particularly when other allocations are increased at the expense of programs that are so vital to the health, education and economic security of this nation. These programs and services have been cut by 12 percent (\$21 billion) since FY 2010, adjusted for inflation. In real terms, the FY 2015 level is already at its second lowest level since FY 2001—the only lower year being FY 2013 when sequestration's across-the-board cuts took effect.

Rather than reversing this trend and beginning to restore funding, the proposed FY 2016 Labor-HHS allocation will further erode funding. If this allocation is adopted, it will be virtually impossible to fund important initiatives—such as combating antibiotic resistant bacteria and the opioid epidemic; fulfilling the federal government's promise to raise its share of funding for IDEA special education closer to the promised level of 40 percent; and providing resources to meet the health, safety and quality requirements established by the recent bipartisan Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) reauthorization—without deep cuts in other equally important initiatives.

It is time for Congress to acknowledge that the existing austerity framework is unsustainable. Under current law, the funding available to meet basic education, health, social service, and employment and training needs is simply too low, forcing the House Appropriations Committee to set allocations that are unrealistic. We urge you to recognize the value of Labor-HHS programs in improving the lives of American families and reject the proposed FY 2016 allocation of \$153.05 billion.

If you have questions about this statement or the community's letter, please contact:

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