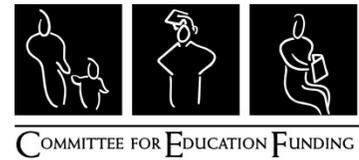




## COALITION *for* HEALTH FUNDING



May 7, 2014

Dear House Appropriations Committee Member,

We are writing on behalf of [more than 1050 education, health and workforce training organizations](#) to express our disappointment in the proposed fiscal year (FY) 2015 302(b) allocation for the Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations (Labor-H) bill. Unfortunately, we cannot support the proposed allocation because while non-defense discretionary (NDD) funding overall had a small increase, the proposed Labor-H allocation represents yet another funding cut for critical education, health, and employment and training programs.

While we are aware that the committee faces significant fiscal constraints under the existing budget caps, it is nonetheless extremely troubling that the proposed allocation is \$1 billion less than FY 2014 levels, which was \$17.1 billion below FY 2010 (adjusted for inflation). Since 2010, discretionary programs have absorbed nearly three-quarters of the funding cuts made under the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution, the Budget Control Act, the American Taxpayer Relief Act, and other austerity measures. Rather than reversing this trend and beginning to restore funding for core government functions, the FY 2015 Labor-H allocation proposed by the committee instead continues this trend toward disinvestment. Continued cuts of this magnitude will cause real and irreparable harm to tens of millions of Americans.

We would also note that there are other urgent needs—such as an additional \$1 billion for unaccompanied alien children services and an extra \$270 million for student loan servicing costs—that will require additional cuts to existing programs under the proposed allocation. If we meet these needs, the funding available for existing programs will be about \$2.5 billion below last year's allocation.

The proposed 302(b) allocation, which is lower than every year since FY 2001 when adjusted for inflation, will require cuts to job training, health, and education programs that will increase disease and sickness among Americans, short-circuit critical biomedical research programs, harm the economy by making it more difficult to provide people with needed job training, reduce the quality of education for our nation's schoolchildren, and make it more expensive to attend college.

We are all trying to do more with less, but it is time for Congress to acknowledge that the existing austerity frame is unsustainable. Under current law, the funding available to meet basic education, health, and employment and training needs is simply too low, forcing the Appropriations Committee to set allocations that are unrealistic. And it only gets worse from here: while we have some limited sequester relief in FY 2015, we face the full impact of sequestration again in 2016 and for years to come. This is unacceptable. We urge members of Congress to work together to end sequestration and raise the caps, not only for FY 2015 but for the long-term.

Rachel Gragg, co-convener, Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (202-223-8991, ext. 102 or [rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org](mailto:rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org))

Emily Holubowich, Executive Director, Coalition for Health Funding (202-484-1100 or [eholubowich@dc-crd.com](mailto:eholubowich@dc-crd.com))

Joel Packer, Executive Director, Committee for Education Funding (202-383-0083 or [JPacker@cef.org](mailto:JPacker@cef.org))