



COALITION *for*
HEALTH FUNDING



November 19, 2021

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

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

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

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

Dear Chair DeLauro, Chairman Leahy, Ranking Member Granger, and Vice Chairman Shelby:

On behalf of the Campaign to invest in American's Workforce, the Coalition for Health Funding, the Coalition on Human Needs, and the Committee for Education Funding and our members, we urge you to pass the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill as soon as possible. The bill passed by the House this summer and the bill proposed by the Senate Appropriations Committee this fall provide vital increased funding for the programs and services that have a profound impact on health and well-being, child development, educational and skills attainment, employment, and productivity. Failing to enact the FY 2022 bill and relying on continuing resolutions (CRs) would be a grave missed opportunity to improve the lives of all Americans.

The use of extended CRs creates disruption and dysfunction, and injects fiscal uncertainty into an already uncertain environment for the agencies that support the nation's public health, education, job training, social services, and much more. The reliance on CRs that extend far into the new fiscal year that has become commonplace in recent years limits Congress's ability to exercise its oversight authority and make necessary adjustments to funding levels to meet new demands.

While short-term CRs are challenging enough, the possibility of a year-long CR could be catastrophic as our nation continues to struggle to return to normalcy amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. Below are some examples highlighting the challenges that a year-long continuing resolution poses to critical programs funded by the Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill:

- Last year, the nation's overdose rate increased by a staggering 30 percent with 90,000 deaths nationwide—a rate of increase not seen in three decades and it is now reported that drug overdose deaths reached 100,000 between April 2020 and April 2021, a grim record. In FY 2022, states are slated to receive billions of dollars to assist with prevention, treatment, and recovery services—these dollars will be lost with a full year CR.

- CRs make it difficult for state and local health departments, as well as school districts, to plan activities and hire staff as they rely on predictable funding from federal agencies to carry out their work. Funding delays will hold up essential programmatic work in communities across the country.
- CRs force grant-funding agencies like the National Institutes of Health to adopt conservative funding policies, holding back on investments in new areas of life-saving research and damaging existing ongoing research efforts. Unreliable and unpredictable funding streams hurt the nation's scientific enterprise, and damage America's competitiveness globally.
- After a decade of almost frozen funding for education, the House and Senate Labor-HHS-Education bills provided needed investments for FY 2022, starting to address long-standing needs along the education continuum. Freezing funding at last year's levels would leave funding for the Department of Education below the level of a decade ago in inflation-adjusted dollars.
- The pandemic continues to have profound impacts on teaching and learning, and while the COVID-relief already enacted supports short-term costs associated with the pandemic, there will be new, ongoing needs that the FY 2022 appropriations bill begins to address for students, educators, and institutions.
- During the pandemic, the costs of child care at a center rose an estimated 47 percent, while family day care increased by 70 percent; many child care centers were forced to close. Lack of child care is keeping many women from rejoining the labor force. The House bill increases child care by \$1.5 billion and Head Start by \$1.4 billion; flat-funding child care would make it impossible to rebuild capacity.
- More than 11.8 million^[1] people are unemployed or underemployed and women, people of color and people without an education past high school comprise a disproportionate amount of these workers. A CR would deny additional investments to an already historically underfunded workforce system at a time of great need.
- As the Administration works to implement the historic investments to our nation's infrastructure included in the Bipartisan Infrastructure Bill, the demand for skilled workers in industries including construction, manufacturing, energy and related industries will continue to grow. At the same time, workers who lost their jobs in retail, hospitality and other sectors hardest hit by the pandemic are looking for opportunities to build new skills for available job opportunities. A CR denies critical investments in training programs necessary to mitigate the current skills mismatch and allow workers to access the jobs for which businesses are hiring.
- The cost to heat a home with natural gas is projected to rise by 30 percent this winter; heating oil costs are expected to rise by 43 percent. Flat-funding for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program would lead to dramatic reductions in the number of households served and the amount of help they get from LIHEAP.

^[1] THE EMPLOYMENT SITUATION — OCTOBER 2021 – Bureau of Labor Statistics

The undersigned organizations call on Congress to pass a FY 2022 appropriations bill in a timely manner to avoid the damaging trend of long-term CRs and provide needed services for the American public. Thank you for your consideration. If you have questions about this letter, please contact:

- Erin Will Morton, [Coalition for Health Funding](https://www.coalitionforhealthfunding.org) (emorton@dc-crd.com);
- Sarah Abernathy, [Committee for Education Funding](https://www.committeeforeducationfunding.org) (abernathy@cef.org);
- Katie Spiker, [Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce](https://www.campaigntoinvestinamericasworkforce.org) (KatieS@nationalskillscoalition.org); or
- Deborah Weinstein, [Coalition on Human Needs](https://www.coalitiononhumanneeds.org) (dweinstein@chn.org).

Sincerely,



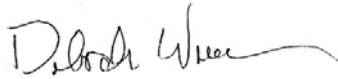
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Deborah Weinstein
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cc: House and Senate Appropriations Committee Members