

April XX, 2013

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

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

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 XXX undersigned organizations—representing the full range of stakeholders in the programs of the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services (HHS), and Education—urge you to provide the largest possible FY 2014 302(b) allocation to the Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee. Rebuilding our investment in these domestic programs will boost the economy and reduce the deficit through prevention of costly chronic diseases, increased earnings, and reduced expenditures for unemployment and other social service programs.

The programs and services administered by these Departments serve a broad range of constituencies and needs, but they all share a common, fundamental goal of strengthening this nation by improving Americans' lives. Despite their profound impact on American health, educational and skills attainment, and productivity, these programs and services have been deeply cut since FY 2010. These and other discretionary programs have contributed \$1.5 trillion in spending cuts from the Fiscal Year 2011 Continuing Resolution, the Budget Control Act, and the American Taxpayer Relief Act. Under sequestration, these programs have been cut even deeper. The FY 2013 cuts to these programs alone total almost \$9 billion.

With the rapid erosion of these critical federal functions, America stands to fall even farther behind our industrialized counterparts:

- The United States ranks 30th in infant mortality – widely recognized as a basic indicator of a country's overall health – behind even some developing countries.

- The United States faces large and unacceptable gaps by race and socioeconomic status in student achievement, high school graduation, and college attendance and completion rates.
- Despite a 7.7 percent unemployment rate, our nation's businesses are struggling to find the skilled workers they need to sustain economic recovery, as a 2012 Manpower survey found 50 percent of U.S. employers report having difficulty filling current job openings.

More than 3,200 organizations have [previously called on Congress](#) to stop sequestration. Although sequestration is already in effect, we continue to urge you to work with your colleagues to reverse these harmful cuts by replacing them with a credible, balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not include further cuts to programs that have already done their part. Only a balanced approach to deficit reduction can restore fiscal stability. Continued cuts will move us backward in growing the economy, increasing jobs, improving global competitiveness, protecting the health of Americans and increasing educational attainment.

It is shortsighted to further cut discretionary funding in the interest of deficit reduction. We urge you to recognize the value of health, education, job training, and social services in improving the lives of American families and strengthening our global position. These discretionary programs should be protected from further cuts that will have profound consequences on our nation's global competitiveness and our capacity to address the needs of the most vulnerable.

If you have questions about this letter, please contact Emily Holubowich, Coalition for Health Funding (202-484-1100 or eholubowich@dc-crd.com), Joel Packer, Committee for Education Funding (202-383-0083 or JPacker@cef.org), or Rachel Gragg, Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce (202-223-8991 or rachelg@nationalskillscoalition.org).

Sincerely,

Campaign to Invest in America's Workforce
Coalition for Health Funding
Committee for Education Funding
National Skills Coalition