

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–3812

April 27, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
House Committee on Appropriations
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole:

As you consider Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23), we urge you to prioritize funding for Head Start - which also includes Early Head Start, American Indian and Alaska Native Head Start, and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start. When Head Start was launched in 1965, the idea of providing comprehensive health, nutrition, and education services to the most vulnerable children and their families was revolutionary. But the Head Start model – developed over the decades, built on evidence-based practices, and using the best available science and teaching techniques – is constantly evolving to meet the needs of local communities effectively and successfully. Head Start and Early Head Start now serve over one million children and their families annually, preparing them for success in school and life, and employ more than 262,000 people nationwide.

As you know, Head Start and Early Head Start programs offer services to children from at-risk backgrounds – those living in poverty, in foster care, or experiencing homelessness – as well as employment and educational support to their parents. Increased funding for Head Start is a wise, cost-effective investment in families and local communities that ultimately leads to greater prosperity for future generations. Research has repeatedly demonstrated that high-quality early childhood education programs like Head Start generate a significant return on investment, and that the advantages of the program can last a lifetime.

Head Start represents our nation’s commitment to building strong families and communities and to breaking the cycle of poverty that prevents too many children from achieving their full potential. According to the Office of Head Start, its graduates score higher on school readiness measures such as verbal achievement, perceptual reasoning, and social competence than their peers who do not attend preschool. For every dollar invested in Head Start children and families, the country realizes almost nine dollars in benefits through increased earnings, decreased welfare dependence, and reduced reliance on other social programs.

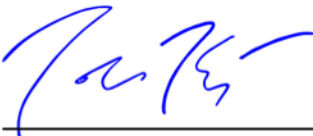
Throughout the course of this pandemic, Head Start programs have proven to be resilient, adapting and readapting as necessary and continuing to provide critical services to the most vulnerable children and their families. In Fiscal Year 2021 alone, Head Start and Early Head Start staff conducted over 4,566,696 home visits to families, helped more than 490,880 children stay up to date on early and periodic, diagnostic, and treatment screenings, and provided preventative dental care to over 306,414 children. We collectively commend this effort. Building on that success, it's essential that we continue to invest in Head Start's proven, crisis-tested work that unlocks the doors to opportunity for families across our great nation.

As you evaluate FY23 funding requests, we urge the Subcommittee to prioritize and provide robust support for Head Start. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



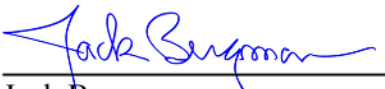
Fred Keller
Member of Congress



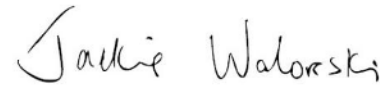
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