



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

April 26, 2023

Jenny Smulson, President
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

Emily Crawford, Vice President
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships

Steve Voytek, Treasurer
Advance CTE

Emmanuel A. Guillory, Past President, National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

Emily Andrews
Center for Law and Social Policy

Frank Ballmann
National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs

Samuel Chasin
YMCA of the USA

Noelle Ellerson Ng
AASA, the School Superintendents Association

Nicole Fuller
National Center for Learning Disabilities

David Griffith
National Association of Elementary School Principals

Crystal Martinez
University of California

Kenneth Polishchuk
American Psychological Association Services

Lena Rodriguez
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

Rachel Rotunda
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

Nicole Russell
National Association of Federally Impacted Schools

Stephanie Salvador
National Education Association

Sarah Abernathy, Executive Director, Committee for Education Funding

Dear Members of Congress:

We write on behalf of the more than 100 education organizations and institutions that are members of the [Committee for Education Funding \(CEF\)](#) to **urge the House to oppose the spending cuts in the “[Limit, Save, Grow Act of 2023](#),” which would jeopardize federal support for teaching and learning for the next ten years instead of providing the additional support needed for education.** The bill cuts discretionary funding for fiscal year (FY) 2024 to the FY 2022 level and then caps growth at one percent per year for the next nine years – far below the historic rate of increase Congress has appropriated to meet the nation’s needs. The bill does not protect any areas from cuts next year or in the future, but House Republicans have said they do not want to cut defense, veterans’ health care, or homeland security funding, which would lead to a cut of 22 percent under this bill for other non-defense discretionary funding, including education. We also oppose the bill’s provisions rescinding all unobligated COVID-relief funding, which could pull away support that states had planned to use to ameliorate the pandemic’s long-term impact on students.

We have seen what happens when arbitrary and low spending caps are enacted because the Budget Control Act of 2011 had similar, but less deep, spending caps that caused years of education spending cuts that hurt students, families, and communities. As a result of those caps on non-defense discretionary funding, Department of Education funding remained below the FY 2011 level for the next six years, and even now that the caps have expired, FY 2023 funding is still \$13 billion below the FY 2011 level in inflation-adjusted dollars. Instead of cutting education funding for FY 2024, Congress should be increasing these vital investments.

Like the current bill, the 2011 Act lifted the debt ceiling while cutting and capping discretionary spending for the next ten years, among other provisions. But those spending caps proved so unworkable that Congress repeatedly had to raise them. Those resulting spending limits still allowed more than the one percent annual growth in the current bill; non-defense discretionary funding increased by [26 percent](#) over FY 2012-2021, compared with the 9 percent

1800 M Street NW, 500 South Tower, Washington, DC 20036
(202) 327-8125

www.cef.org Twitter and Instagram: @edfunding

growth allowed for all discretionary spending over FY 2024-2033 in the current bill. If defense and certain other spending categories are protected from cuts, the impact on remaining non-defense programs like education would be devastating. Just for FY 2024, Education Secretary Miguel Cardona [described](#) some of the impacts of a 22 percent cut in spending, including classrooms losing tens of thousands of teachers and service providers and college students losing aid that makes it possible for them to continue their education. Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra [wrote](#) that a 22 percent cut for next year would eliminate 200,000 Head Start slots for children and 101,000 slots for child care.

This bill will preclude needed investments in education that have only grown because of the pandemic. [High school graduation rates declined from 2020 to 2021](#) in more than half of US states. More students and staff have [greater needs for mental health care](#) but school-based services are already in short supply. Undergraduate postsecondary enrollment is [8 percent lower than before the pandemic](#), with many students taking on new responsibilities and unable to afford to pursue higher education. The [nationwide teacher shortage](#) that existed before the pandemic has worsened, with unfilled vacancies in a majority of states. This bill's sharp cut to discretionary spending conflicts with recent [poll results](#) showing that a majority of the public thinks the government already spends too little on education. We urge you to oppose the bill's arbitrary spending cuts and harmful impact on investments in education.

CEF, the nation's oldest and largest education coalition, is a non-partisan and non-profit organization reflecting the education continuum. Our members are parents and students, teachers and school leaders, specialized instructional support personnel, school board members, universities and school districts, and associations with the common goal of ensuring that education is adequately funded.

Sincerely,



Jenny Smulson
President



Sarah Abernathy
Executive Director