

March 14, 2018

The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
2368-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

We are writing to urge you to prioritize funding for Head Start, including implementation of the new streamlined Program Performance Standards called for in the bipartisan Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, in the Fiscal Year 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill. **Specifically, we request at least \$9,906,669,000 for Head Start.**

Like you, we are keenly aware of the serious constraints on the federal budget generally and on the Labor-HHS bill in particular. We believe that Head Start, which offers education, health and nutrition services to economically disadvantaged children, as well as parenting and employment supports to their parents, is a wise and cost-effective investment in families and local communities. Research has amply demonstrated that high quality early childhood education programs generate a significant return on investment, and that the advantages of Head Start can last a lifetime.

After nearly a decade of implementing changes directed by the bipartisan Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, Head Start programs are continuing to see this legislation's significant impacts in their work with our nation's most vulnerable children. Through educational, health and comprehensive social services to children and families, Head Start promotes healthy development, school readiness, and lifetime success. It does so by tailoring high quality services to each community and family's local preferences and priorities. Numerous reports released in 2016 and 2017 clearly demonstrate Head Start's recent gains.¹

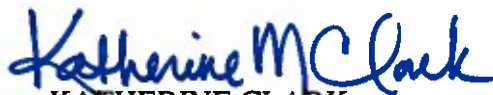
Quality and continuous improvement come at a cost, however. In FY 2019, as in each of the past five years, Head Start programs will strain to pay competitive wages and retain highly qualified staff. *Without* the funds we request, implementation of the 2016 streamlined Head Start Program Performance Standards, in accordance with the bipartisan 2007 reauthorization, will require programs to make an unfathomable choice between cutting access for children or meeting requirements that improve services for children, families, and communities. *With* the

funds we request, such implementation will deliver a renewed focus on strengthening evidence-based practices, effectively utilizing data, and implementing systems of continuous improvement in each Head Start program, as Congress intended. In short, these resources will ensure Head Start continues to deliver opportunities for success in school and life to our most vulnerable children and continues to be a critical investment in America's future.

Finally, we all are deeply aware of the explosion of drug abuse and addiction and its effect on American communities. Head Start sits on the front lines of that war, as vulnerable children are often the greatest victims of drug addiction and abuse. With targeted funding, Head Start will reduce the societal costs of opioid abuse by helping drug-exposed children "catch-up" to their peers while helping support families before it's too late. Intervention at early stages can result in monumental cost savings for the judicial, foster, and educational systems over the course of a child's life.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the FY 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies mark maintain or increase the current number of children and families served while strengthening programs' quality and ability to serve children and families devastated by substance abuse and addiction. We request that you make these necessary investments so that Head Start can continue to provide much-needed education, health and economic development services to America's most vulnerable children and families.

Sincerely,



KATHERINE CLARK
Member of Congress



ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT
Member of Congress

ⁱ Reports include:

Aikens, N., Bush, C., Gleason P., Malone L. & Tarullo, L. (2016) Tracking Quality in Head Start Classrooms: FACES 2006 to FACES 2014. FACES 2014 Report. OPRE Report 2016-95. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/faces_tracking_quality_in_head_start_100716_b508.pdf

Aikens, N., Kopack Klein, A., Tarullo, L. & West, J. (2013) Getting Ready for Kindergarten: Children's Progress During Head Start. FACES 2009 Report. OPRE Report 2013-21a. Washington, DC: Office of Planning, Research and Evaluation, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Retrieved from https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/opre/faces_2009_child_outcomes_brief_final.pdf

Barr, Andrew and Chloe Gibbs. (2017) "Breaking the Cycle? The Intergenerational Effects of Head Start." Under Review.

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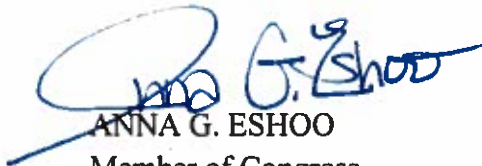
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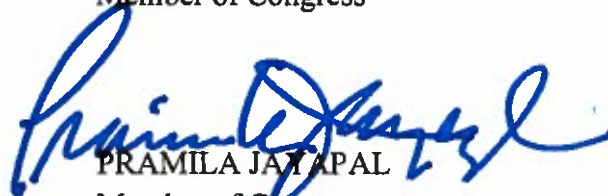
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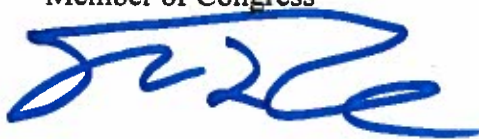
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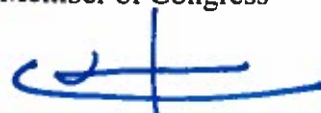
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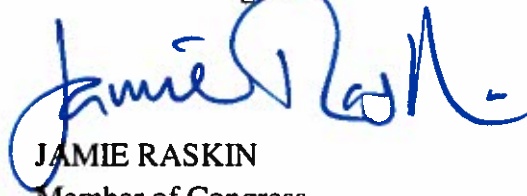
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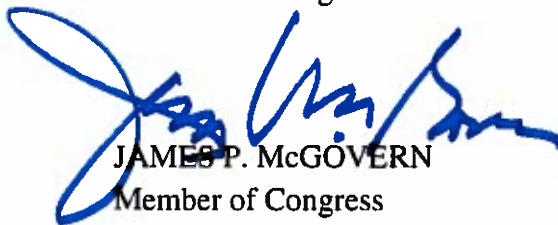
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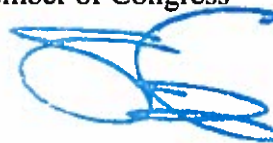
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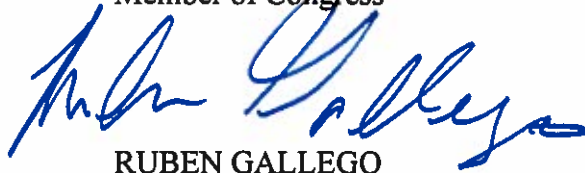
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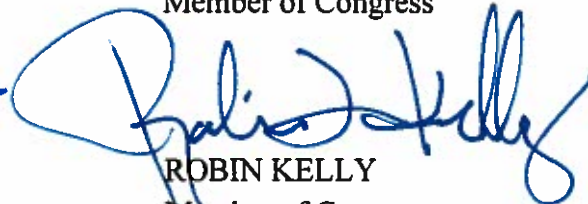
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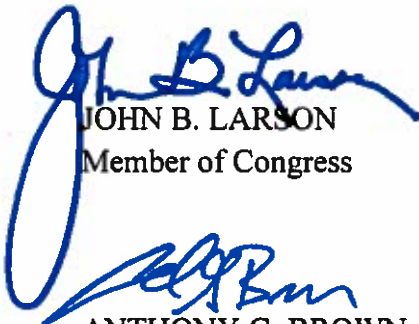
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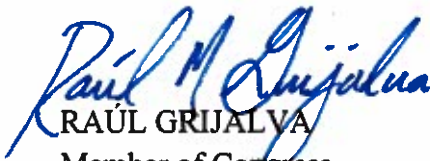
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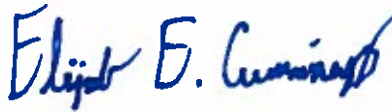

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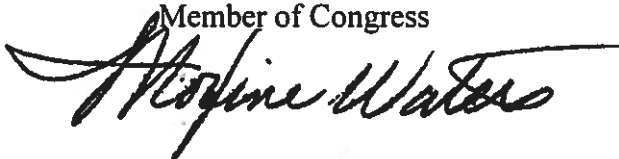

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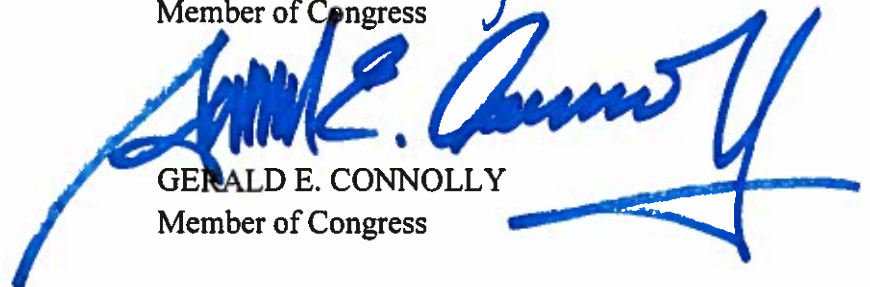

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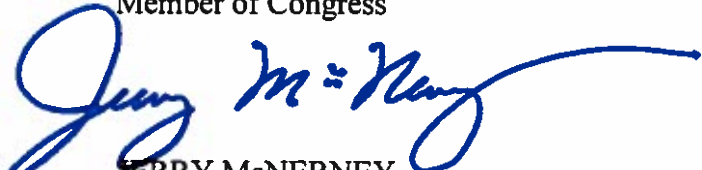
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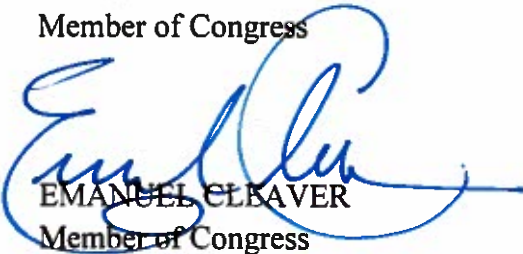
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