



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

April 28, 2021

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chair
Labor, HHS, Education, Labor, HHS,
Education,
& Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Labor, HHS, Education, Labor, HHS,
Education,
& Related Agencies Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro and Ranking Member Cole,

While frustration is high over the seemingly endless COVID-19 stimulus spending, there is clear and bipartisan recognition that Head Start programs throughout the country have heroically stepped in to ensure basic needs for children living in poverty are met. Head Start staff have worked tirelessly and creatively to ensure early childhood learning has continued amid complex circumstances. This has ranged from home delivery of educational resources and summer school hours to facility modifications and double-sessions to achieve COVID-19 social distance protocols.

As a result of this dedication, the vast majority of Head Start programs have been open for months deploying responsible COVID-19 operational modifications. In fact, in December 2020, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cited Head Start as a model for implementation of in-person services because of its successful adherence to CDC guidance and ability to mitigate COVID-19 risk. We collectively commend this effort.

We also know that these past fifteen months have been particularly difficult for children with limited resources and the impact of this pandemic will be far more emotional and psychological than physical for most young learners and families at the edge. That is why we strongly encourage the Subcommittee to ensure robust Quality Improvement Funding for science-backed trauma-informed care in the FY22 Labor, HHS, & Education Appropriations Bill.

Pre-pandemic and with the rise of opioid and illicit drug increases, Congress initiated a targeted effort to bolster trauma intervention and prevention among Head Start participants. This led to additional staff training, licensed counseling referrals, and immediate interventions for children and families. Now as we come out of the pandemic period, these demands for evaluations and care are even greater.



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As you evaluate FY22 funding requests, we encourage the Subcommittee to fully assess this need and provide robust support to ensure Head Start programs can access trauma-informed care resources post-pandemic.

Sincerely,

STEVE STIVERS
Member of Congress

/S/

JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ-COLÓN
Member of Congress

/S/

CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH
Member of Congress

/S/

JACK BERGMAN
Member of Congress

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RALPH NORMAN
Member of Congress

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DAVID B. MCKINLEY, P.E.
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YOUNG KIM
Member of Congress

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BRIAN FITZPATRICK
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