

APPROPRIATIONS: FY2022 Dear Colleague Letters

The appropriations process is an important time for legislators to determine their priorities for the next fiscal year. Congress uses this process to allocate funding for federal programs, activities and priorities. For the past several years, amid a myriad of competing priorities and limited funds, federal early learning and care programs have seen historic appropriations increases through bipartisan Congressional spending bills.

On Capitol Hill, "Dear Colleague" letters are a key way for lawmakers to convey and generate support for these programs among their colleagues. Lawmakers collaborate to show appropriators the breadth and depth of support on Capitol Hill, and often make specific requests related to program funding levels.

This year, 5 separate "Dear Colleague" letters were circulated related to the federal early learning and care programs. Some notable statistics are included below:

- 225 total members of Congress signed onto ECE Dear Colleague Letters, including 182 Democrats and 43 Republicans
- More than 1 in 5 House Republicans joined a Dear Colleague letter supporting robust funding for early learning and care programs
- More Republicans signed onto the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) Dear Colleague than ever before, a 56% increase over last year
- Steady increase in the number of signers to the bipartisan letter supporting Head Start funding
- A 14% increase in the number of signers to the Democratic House Dear Colleague letter supporting CCDBG and IDEA funding in FY22

Bipartisan House Dear Colleague Letter Supporting Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) in FY2022

- Letter to Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Tom Cole urging the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to provide robust funding for CCDBG.
- Led by Representatives Rodney Davis (R-IL), Steve Stivers (R-OH) and Pete Stauber (R-MN).
- Signed by 25 Republicans, an increase of 9 over last year, and 1 Democrat

Democratic House Dear Colleague Letter Supporting CCDBG and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in FY2022

- Letter to Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Tom Cole urging the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to fund CCDBG with an additional \$6.1B (an increase of \$1.6B over last year) and provide increased funds for IDEA:
- \$722.2M in FY22 for IDEA Part C
- \$537.3M in FY22 for IDEA Part B, an increase of \$146.2M over last year
- Led by Representatives Katherine Clark (D-MA), Mark DeSaulnier (D-CA), Donald Norcross (D-NJ), Jamaal Bowman (D-NY), Marilyn Strickland (D-WA), and Norma Torres (D-CA) (led in FY21 by: Clark, Fudge, DeSaulnier, Norcross, and Torres)
- Signed by 157 Democrats, an increase of 20 over last year

- **Republican House Dear Colleague Letter Supporting Head Start in FY2022**
 - Letter to Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Tom Cole urging the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to provide robust support to Head Start programs (FY21 letter called for funding “at the highest possible level”).
 - Led by Representative Steve Stivers (R-OH) (in FY21, led by Stivers, Stefanik, Lesko, and Walorski).
 - Signed by 34 Republicans

- **Bipartisan House Dear Colleague Letter Supporting Head Start in FY2022**
 - Letter to Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Tom Cole urging the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to fund Head Start at \$12.1B (at least), a \$1.3B increase over FY21 (FY21 ask was \$11,369,445,000, a \$756M increase over FY20).
 - Led by Representatives Katherine Clark (D-MA), Lauren Underwood (D-IL), and Joseph Morelle (D-NY) (led by Clark and Underwood in FY21).
 - Signed by 171 Democrats, an increase of 8 over last year, and 1 Republican

- **Bipartisan House Dear Colleague Letter Supporting Preschool Development Grant Birth through Five (PDG B-5) in FY2022**
 - Letter to Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro and Ranking Member Tom Cole urging the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee to fund PDG B-5 program at a level of at least \$500M, an increase of \$100M over last year.
 - Led by Representatives Joaquin Castro (D-TX) and John Katko (R-NY).
 - Signed by 90 Democrats & 3 Republicans

About First Five Years Fund

The first five years last forever. At First Five Years Fund, we work to protect, prioritize, and build bipartisan support for quality child care and early learning programs at the federal level. Reliable, affordable, and high-quality early learning and child care can be transformative, not only enhancing a child's prospects for a brighter future but also bolstering working parents and fostering economic stability nationwide. Join us at www.ffyf.org.