

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515–2308

March 24, 2023

The Honorable Robert Aderholt
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and
Related Agencies
1036 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As you consider Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations legislation for Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24), we urge you to continue funding Head Start at the strongest level the Subcommittee deems possible. At a time when there are significant disagreements on the federal budget and the most effective use of taxpayer dollars, continued investment to build on the successes of Head Start is a fiscally responsible decision.

Since launched nearly 60 years ago, Head Start has effectively embraced and implemented a “whole child, whole family” model. Children from at-risk backgrounds - those living in poverty, in foster care, or experiencing homelessness - benefit from comprehensive education, health, and nutrition services. Their parents and caregivers also benefit from those services, in addition to employment and educational support.

In Fiscal Year 2022 alone, Head Start and Early Head Start staff conducted over 4.5 million home visits to families, helped over 550,000 children stay up-to-date on early and periodic diagnostic and treatment screenings, and provided preventative dental care to over 370,000 children. Head Start programs also represent a key opportunity to support many of the children and families most adversely affected by trauma. Serving this vulnerable population is a core strength of Head Start, but post-pandemic, it has become even more urgent, with children showing up with clear signs of trauma and related behavioral issues. Funding for Head Start to address childhood trauma has dramatic long-term cost savings.

Research has demonstrated that high-quality early childhood education programs like Head Start generate a significant return on investment, and the advantages of the program can last a lifetime. A study published in December 2022 in the *Journal of Political Economy* concluded that Head Start children (and their children as well) have higher educational attainment, lower teen pregnancy, and less criminal engagement on average. These findings complement other research concluding that Head Start benefits the children it serves. 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 children and families across our great nation.

Head Start is a key component of 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. It's a program that prepares children for success in school and life and employs over a quarter of a million individuals across the country.

Continued robust funding for Head Start is a wise, cost-effective investment in children, families, and local communities that ultimately leads to greater prosperity for future generations. As you evaluate FY24 funding requests, we urge the Subcommittee to prioritize Head Start. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress



Jenniffer González-Colón
Member of Congress



Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



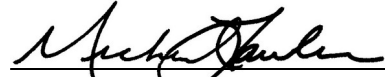
Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress



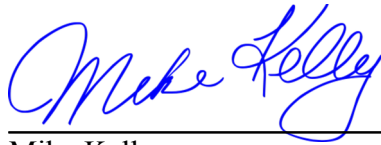
Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress



Richard Hudson
Member of Congress



Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress



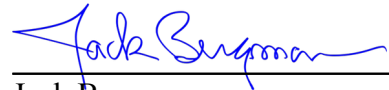
Mike Kelly
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