



January 9, 2013

The Honorable Patty Murray
United States Senate
448 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Senator Murray,

On behalf of the First Focus Campaign for Children, congratulations on your appointment as Chair of the Senate Budget Committee. The nation is very lucky to have such a strong and passionate advocate for children and families in such an important position.

As Chair of the Budget Committee, you will have the tremendous responsibility of helping to define our nation's fiscal priorities. In this time of budget uncertainty, our country will absolutely benefit from your leadership.

Whether education, healthcare, nutrition, or any issue, protecting and investing in children has always been at the forefront of your agenda. As one of only a handful of Senators we have named a Champion for Children three years straight, we know you will continue to work tirelessly for kids in your new role.

In the coming year, we face some serious challenges for kids. Right now, investments in children make up less than eight percent of the federal budget and for the first time since we began tracking, we have seen discretionary spending on kids decline 2 years in a row by a total of \$2 billion. At a time when more than one in every five kids lives in poverty, we should be increasing our commitment to kids.

As negotiations come to a head over pending fiscal issues, we're thankful for your steadfast resolve to protect investments for children. We greatly appreciate your efforts to ensure that expansions in the Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit from 2009, which have helped keep millions of children from falling further into poverty, are continued. In the coming months, we will continue to fight tirelessly with you to ensure that investments to kids are protected from sequestration and other budget choices. Moving forward, we hope to work with you on a broader look at investments by passing the Children's Budget Act, which would provide a full accounting of all federal funding for kids.

There is no better place for a mother and a former teacher than in the leadership of the United States Senate. Congratulations on the new position and thank you for your effort to make children and families a priority in federal policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Bruce Lesley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent loop on the "L" and a trailing flourish on the "y".

Bruce Lesley
President