



July 10, 2013

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator,

I am writing today to **strongly urge you to vote for the Fiscal Year 2014 (FY14) Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education appropriations bill authored by Senator Harkin**, on behalf of the First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan national children's advocacy organization. The Campaign for Children advocates directly for legislative change in Congress to ensure children and families are the priority in federal policy and budget decisions.

Since 2010, discretionary investments for children have been cut by nearly \$6 billion. In 2013 alone, sequestration cuts have cost children more than \$4 billion. This bill and the overall budget allocation would replace sequestration in a sensible manner, restore cuts to kids, and make smart choices for our future. **We are particularly happy to see additional investments for Head Start, Promise Neighborhoods, Title I supports, community health centers, and lead remediation, as well as new investments to create Preschool Development Grants and a State Paid Leave Fund.**

**In contrast with the Senate, the House proposed allocation for the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education bill would cut kids by more than 22 percent from pre-sequester levels.** What does a 22 percent cut mean in real dollars? It means \$2.5 billion less for students with disabilities. It means nearly \$300 million less for schools that serve military families and Native American reservations. It means \$140 million less for maternal and child health services. And it means \$62 million less to protect children from child abuse and neglect.

**While we may not agree with all individual funding levels, on the whole this bill is a tremendous step in the right direction of fully investing in our nation's children.** Investments in children make up less than 8 percent of the total federal budget, yet we know they are some of the smartest we can make for our nation's future. Children are not the cause of our fiscal situation and we need to ensure that every one of them has a shot at the American Dream.

That is why I strongly urge you to support this FY14 appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Bruce Lesley  
President