

September 26, 2013

The United States Senate
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Senator:

We the undersigned children's organizations write to **you in strong opposition to a Continuing Resolution (CR) at \$986 billion that continues billions of dollars of harmful sequestration cuts.** Any CR must be "clean" and continue to fund the Affordable Care Act. To do otherwise would jeopardize the health coverage of millions of children enrolled in the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP) and imperils the health of millions of children.

Children and families across the nation are feeling the pain as discretionary investments that matter to kids have been cut by more than \$4 billion dollars in fiscal year 2013 as a result of sequestration. As a result, 57,000 children have been kicked out of Head Start, families are on the verge of homelessness because of housing cuts, and schools have reduced staff and services to students, particularly those with special needs and those living in low income areas or near military bases or reservations. Families depending on emergency unemployment compensation are trying to do without. This all comes on top of nearly \$2 billion in additional cuts to discretionary investments since 2010.

Originally enacted in 1997 with broad bipartisan support, CHIP provides quality health insurance for an estimated nine million children. In 2010, funding for CHIP was extended through 2015 as part of the Affordable Care Act (ACA). If funding were cut off, on October 1st, CHIP would be cut from \$19.0 billion to \$5.7 billion, a \$13.3 billion cut from CHIP (a 70 percent reduction) and therefore imperil the health coverage for millions of children. The consequences would also be devastating to state governments that administer CHIP.

Separate from destroying CHIP, defunding the ACA would have broad ramifications for children's health including denying coverage to the estimated four million new children who would gain health insurance from the law. Foster youth below the age of 25 who were in foster care for six months or more would no longer be eligible for Medicaid, home visiting programs proven to be effective would not be expanded, and new outreach efforts to help keep kids healthy would stop. Defunding the ACA is bad policy for children.

Investments in children have declined three years in a row and make up less than 8 cents of every dollar spent by the federal government. When more than one in every four children lives in poverty, now is not the time to pass any legislation that would jeopardize their well-being. Children are not the cause of our fiscal imbalance, and cutting the investments that help them grow is a poor decision that threatens our future. **This is why we urge you to stop sequestration and protect gains made in children's health.**

Sincerely,

1. American Federation of Teachers
2. Campaign for Youth Justice
3. Child Welfare League of America
4. Children's Health Fund
5. First Focus Campaign for Children
6. MomsRising
7. National Association for the Education of Homeless Children and Youth
8. National Child Abuse Coalition
9. National Education Association
10. National Title I Association
11. Public Advocacy for Kids
12. Save the Children
13. School Based Health Alliance
14. YMCA