



FIRST FOCUS

CAMPAIGN FOR CHILDREN

April 10, 2014

The United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Representative:

The First Focus Campaign for Children, a bipartisan national children's advocacy organization dedicated to making kids the priority in federal policy and budget decisions, **writes to express our strong opposition and urge a NO vote on House Continuing Resolution 96, the Fiscal Year 2015 Budget Resolution as reported by the House Budget Committee.**

This budget would be devastating to our nation's children and families in almost every area of their well-being. Every child deserves the right to go to the doctor when they are sick and no parent should have to worry that they will be unable to afford the visit. Unfortunately, the budget makes deep cuts of \$732 billion to Medicaid, resulting in an estimated \$145 billion cut to children's healthcare. Though children are only 20 percent of the cost of Medicaid, they represent nearly half of those enrolled. The budget resolution effectively ends the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), cutting another \$21 billion from investments for kids. Since its inception, CHIP has been a bipartisan success in providing health coverage for nearly nine million children.

No child should ever go hungry. However, changes to the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program will cut \$135 billion, resulting in a \$63 billion cut to children, as they make up almost half those who receive nutrition assistance. We estimate that the deep non-defense discretionary cuts of \$790 billion will result in \$123 billion in additional cuts to discretionary investments for children over the next 10 years. Applied proportionally, this means:

- A cut of more than \$22 billion for schools that serve low-income students;
- A cut of \$18 billion in grants to states through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;
- A cut of more than \$10 billion to nutrition supports in the Special Supplemental Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC);
- A cut of nearly \$8 billion in family housing assistance;
- A cut of nearly \$4 billion in childcare assistance; and
- A cut of \$150 million to supports for child abuse and neglect prevention.

These areas and many others have felt the sting of earlier cuts to annual congressional appropriations. **Already, when adjusted for inflation, discretionary investments in 2014 are three percent below 2007 appropriated levels.** Further cuts to annual appropriations for children would be catastrophic.

We know investments in children make a difference. In 2012 housing supports lifted more than one million children out of poverty, while Free and Reduced Price Lunch and WIC lifted another one million as well. Early childhood investments are proven to create better-educated and healthier adults who contribute more to the economy over their lifetime.

In a recent poll commissioned by our organization, 67 percent of respondents were not confident that the life for their children's generation would be better than it has been for them. Only 13 percent believed the lives of American children are better now than they were 10 years ago. With this crisis in confidence, it is clear that we need a budget that fully invests in our children. **We know our nation has fiscal issues that need to be addressed, but mortgaging our children's future is no way to solve them. Please vote NO on H. Con. Res 96.**

Sincerely,

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

Bruce Lesley
President