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**Joel Packer**, Executive Director  
Committee for Education Funding

January 15, 2014

Dear Representative:

The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 113 national education associations and institutions representing preschool to postgraduate education, is writing to share our views on the Fiscal Year (FY) 2014 Consolidated Appropriations Act.

We are pleased that after three years of cuts, constrained caps, freezes, sequesters and shutdowns, this bipartisan bill turns a corner on investing in education and stops moving our nation backward in efforts to improve overall student achievement, close achievement gaps, and increase high school graduation and college access and completion rates. It restores \$1.6 billion in sequester cuts to Department of Education programs. It also fully restores the \$401 million sequester cut to Head Start, provides it with a needed inflation increase and includes \$500 million for Early Head Start-Child Care Partnerships. Early childhood education is also boosted by the \$250 million provided through Race To The Top. In addition, funding for safe and healthy schools is increased above the pre-sequester level.

While we understand the constraints under which the Appropriations Committees were acting, nonetheless we are disappointed that the bill only restores two-thirds of the education sequester cuts. Overall FY 2014 discretionary funding for the Department of Education would be \$811 million below the FY 2012 pre-sequester level. In fact, discretionary education spending excluding Pell grants (which was exempt from the sequester cut) would be below the FY 2006 level, even though schools and colleges are serving several million additional students since then.

We appreciate that several education programs would be funded at close to their pre-sequester levels, including Title I, Impact Aid, Striving Readers, after school, Math-Science Partnerships, IDEA Part B State Grants, Perkins Career and Technical Education State grants, SEOG, College Work Study, TRIO and GEAR UP. Unfortunately, many receive no relief from the harmful sequester cuts including School Improvement Grants, rural education, Indian education, Promise Neighborhoods, Magnet Schools, School Counseling, School Leadership, IDEA preschool grants, Adult Education State grants, Teacher Quality Partnerships, Research, and Statistics. The bill also fails to fully restore the sequester cuts to critical research funding in NIH and NSF which harms the work being done by research universities and graduate students for the benefit of us all.

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We are further concerned because both the FY 2015 and 2016 spending caps for nondefense discretionary programs are essentially frozen at the FY 2014 level, which will make it very difficult to obtain badly needed restoration of past cuts and additional investments in education for the next two years. Education programs have been subject to multiple waves of cuts since FY 2010. Discretionary funded programs in the Department of Education (exclusive of Pell grants) have been cut by \$3.7 billion, an 8 percent reduction.


We are pleased that the Consolidated Appropriations Act recognizes that solving our nation's fiscal situation and reducing the debt can't and won't happen simply by slashing education and other nondefense discretionary spending. However, we urge the Congress to fully replace the sequester cuts that remain in law for the next seven years. The need to increase the federal investment in education has never been greater. The health of the nation, jobs and the economy are directly linked to such investments. Both unemployment rates and lifetime earnings are based on levels of education attainment.

Thank you for your support for investments in education which are investments in our nation's future economic growth and global competitiveness.

Sincerely,



Kimberly Jones  
President



Joel Packer  
Executive Director