



June 23, 2015

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski,

As you begin consideration and mark up of the fiscal year 2016 Labor-HHS Appropriations bill, New Profit and America Forward urge you to include funding for the Social Innovation Fund (SIF), which has a strong history of spurring innovation, rewarding results, and catalyzing cross-sector partnerships.

The Social Innovation Fund recognizes that government alone cannot be expected to generate the evidence-based, positive outcomes we need to see in America. SIF has played a critical role in supporting the expansion of high-impact nonprofits in communities across the country, bringing innovators from multiple sectors together to develop collective solutions to some of America's most pressing challenges. Federal funds are leveraged through matching funds to ensure that results-driven organizations are able to bring their effective programs to scale at minimal expense to the federal taxpayer.

For example, at a time when only 60% of America's low-income youth graduate from high school, the Pathways Fund¹, a SIF-funded initiative at New Profit, invests in our nation's most promising social innovations that successfully transition youth to post-secondary education and productive employment. Over the course of the five-year initiative, the Pathways Fund will have leveraged its investment from SIF to help more than 250,000 people in 30 regions gain the skills, knowledge, and networks they need to engage in meaningful work, while providing technical assistance around growth, strategy, and the development of effective financial management and measurement and evaluation systems to the nonprofits delivering these interventions.

Unfortunately, last week's markup by the House Labor-HHS Appropriations Subcommittee approved a proposal to cut the federal budget for SIF. We strongly encourage you to fund the Social Innovation Fund at \$80 million dollars so that locally-driven approaches to solve major social challenges can continue to be expanded and have measureable impacts in our nation's communities. Through SIF, during a time of shrinking budgets and growing need, government has improved its ability to do more with less, focus on results and accountability, break down silos, and engage lower-cost technology and human capital resources. We recognize the many difficult choices the Committee faces and thank you for the Committee's ongoing support for social innovation policies. We look forward to working with you to advance this important issue in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Deborah Smolover
Executive Director, America Forward
Managing Partner, New Profit

Tulaine Montgomery
Partner
Pathways Fund, New Profit

¹ Pathways Fund organizations include Year Up, YouthBuild, College Summit, iMentor, College Advising Corps, and Single Stop