



March 10, 2016

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Room S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Barbara Mikulski
Vice Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Committee
S-128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Cochran and Vice Chairwoman Mikulski,

As you prepare the fiscal year 2017 Appropriations bills, the America Forward Coalition urges you to include funding for the programs identified below that spur innovation, reward results, and catalyze cross-sector partnerships to propel America forward.

The America Forward Coalition is a network of more than 70 social innovation organizations that champion innovative, effective, and efficient solutions to our country's most pressing social problems. Our Coalition members are achieving measurable outcomes in more than 14,500 communities nationwide, touching the lives of 8 million Americans each year, and driving progress in education, workforce development, early learning, poverty alleviation, public health, pay for success, social innovation, national service, and criminal justice reform. Since 2007, America Forward's community of innovators has played a leading role in driving the national dialogue on social innovation and advocating for lasting policy change.

We are eager to work with you to advance the policies outlined in this letter and urge you to include and prioritize the following programs in the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies, Financial Services and General Government, Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies, and Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations bills for fiscal year 2017.

Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies

Department of Education

- **\$1.16 billion for 21st Century Community Learning Centers**, which is the same amount provided in FY2016, to support effective extended learning and enrichment opportunities that are connected to content covered during the school day through effective community-school partnerships.
- **\$350 million for the Charter Schools Program** to support high-quality charter schools that break the mold of the status quo and create new solutions to meet critical needs.
- **\$180 million for the Education, Innovation, and Research (EIR)** to increase the number of high-quality applications to build evidence of effectiveness and to demonstrate the feasibility of scaling effective interventions, including support for **ARPA-ED**, to spur the development of educational technology necessary to personalize learning.
- **\$100 million for First in the World** to encourage innovation in higher education necessary to tackle and improve college completion rates, increase the productivity of higher education, build evidence of what works, and scale up proven strategies.



- **\$9.6 billion for Head Start** to increase the number of children attending Head Start for a full school day and a full school year.
- **\$15 million for the InformED initiative** at the Institute of Education Sciences to support efforts that will collect, analyze, and release data and evaluation studies, for internal users and the public, to answer pressing education questions.
- **\$13.6 billion for IDEA** to serve students with disabilities.
- **\$350 million for Preschool Development Grants** to support significant national investments necessary to ensure that all young people have access to a high quality education and the opportunity to succeed.
- **\$30 million for the School Leader Recruitment and Support Program** to seed models of promising principal preparation programs, scale preparation programs with results, and support effective professional development for school leaders in the field. **\$100 million for the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) Grant Program** to recruit and develop teachers, principals, or other school leaders.
- **\$190 million for the Striving Readers Comprehensive Literacy Grant** program to advance literacy skills for students from birth through grade 12.
- **\$1.6 billion for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants** to support locally designed efforts to provide students with well-rounded educational experiences, safe and healthy learning environments, and personalized instruction, including through the effective use of technology.

Department of Labor

- **\$1.33 billion for major formula funds under the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA)**, including the adult, youth, and dislocated worker funding streams and **\$3.2 million for WIOA technical assistance** to provide resources to support state implementation of WIOA.
- **\$500 million for the creation of a Workforce Data Science and Innovation Fund** to address the quality of workforce related data in order to improve training programs and consumer choice.
- **\$2 billion for an Apprenticeship Training Fund** to be funded over five years in an effort to double the number of registered apprenticeships by helping more employers provide high-quality on-the-job training through apprenticeship and to support states and localities with resources to assist employers in creating and expanding apprenticeships.
- **\$102.5 million for YouthBuild** grants that are used to engage low-income 16-24 year olds in a comprehensive full-time education, job training, and community service program in which students earn their GED or HSD while learning job skills by building affordable green housing under skilled supervision, or through providing health or technology services in their communities.

General Provisions- Departments of Labor and Education

- **Continued authority for Performance Partnership Pilots** to award up to 10 new pilots that allow States, tribes and localities to blend certain discretionary funding in order to improve education, employment and other key outcomes for vulnerable youth.

Corporation for National and Community Service

- **\$1.47 billion for the Corporation for National and Community Service** to support high-impact, cost-effective service opportunities in communities that continue to fuel the expansion of innovative programs in a variety of fields.



- **\$70 million for the Social Innovation Fund** to test promising new approaches to major social challenges and to expand evidence-based programs that demonstrate measureable outcomes. This includes the allowable use of up to **20 percent of funds for Pay for Success projects**.

Financial Services and General Government

- **\$300 million for Pay for Success Incentive Fund at Department of Treasury** to help state and local governments implement Pay for Success programs with philanthropies, nonprofits, and other nongovernmental organizations.
- **Support the creation of the Commission on Evidence-Based Policymaking** proposed by Congress in 2014 and again in 2015 that would make recommendations for how to use current administrative data and how to make additional administrative data available for evaluation by Federal and outside researchers.

Transportation, Housing, Urban Development and Related Agencies

- **\$1.5 billion for new Upward Mobility Project** to allow ten States and localities to test and validate promising approaches to help families become more self-sufficient, improve children's outcomes, and revitalize communities. This initiative includes new funding as well as the flexibility to combine funds from four existing block grants to achieve these important objectives.

Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies

- **\$20 million for the new Smart on Juvenile Justice Initiative** to award incentive grants to assist states in fostering better outcomes for justice-involved youth.
- **\$120 million for the Second Chance Act Program** to provide grants to establish and expand adult and juvenile offender reentry programs to reduce recidivism and help those exiting the justice system to rejoin their communities and lead productive lives, including **\$20 million for Pay for Success** projects to provide awards for supporting housing using performance-based metrics.
- **\$30 million for the Justice Reinvestment Initiative** to support states and localities in using a data-driven approach to improve public safety, reduce corrections spending, and to reinvest savings in effective strategies to decrease crime.

The America Forward Coalition respectfully requests that the above programs be included at the identified levels in your fiscal year 2017 Appropriations bills. 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 these important issues in the months ahead.

Sincerely,

Members of the America Forward Coalition



America Forward Coalition

Acelero Learning/Shine Early Learning	Enterprise Community Partners	Peer Health Exchange
Alternative Staffing Alliance	Eye to Eye	Public Allies
America's Promise Alliance	Family Independence Initiative (FII)	Reading Partners
ANet	First Place for Youth	REDF
AppleTree Institute for Education Innovation	Generation Citizen	Roca
AVANCE, Inc.	Genesys Works	Root Cause
Bard Early Colleges	Global Citizen Year	Save the Children
BELL	GreenLight Fund	Say Yes to Education
Beyond 12	iMentor	ServiceNation
Blue Engine	Institute for Child Success	Single Stop
Bottom Line	Invest in Outcomes	Social Enterprise Alliance
BUILD	Jumpstart for Young Children, Inc.	Social Finance US
Child Mind Institute	KIPP	Teach For America
Citizen Schools	LIFT	The Children's Aid Society
City Year, Inc.	LISC	The Corps Network
College Advising Corps	Match Education	The Mission Continues
College Forward	National Center for Learning Disabilities (NCLD)	Third Sector Capital Partners, Inc.
College Possible	New Classrooms Innovation Partners	Turnaround for Children
College Summit	New Leaders	Twin Cities RISE!
Compass Working Capital	New Sector Alliance	uAspire
Connecticut Center for Social Innovation, Inc.	New Teacher Center	Waterford Institute
Corporation for Supportive Housing (CSH)	Opportunity Nation	Year Up
	Peace First	YouthBuild USA
		Youth Villages, Inc.
		10,000 Degrees