

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 24, 2016

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
H-309, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and  
Human Services, Education and Related  
Agencies  
House Committee on Appropriations  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We respectfully urge you to support a total funding level of \$1.3 billion for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers Program in the Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Today, families are relying more than ever on afterschool and summer learning programs as they struggle to keep their jobs, often taking on more hours, and provide their children with basic necessities. Parents who can be secure in the knowledge that their children are exposed to great opportunities in afterschool and summer programs are more productive at work and miss fewer days, and, most importantly, student participants in the programs do better in school and are more likely to graduate.

Many 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers serving low-income children provide not only academic enrichment, but also healthy snacks and meals. Unfortunately, many children are not able to benefit from such services because a growing number of families can no longer afford afterschool programs or the cost of transporting their children to these programs. Just when families need the support most, programs are being forced to reduce services, increase fees or even shut their doors. It is imperative to ensure that these programs are able to meet growing demands.

Last year, passage of the Every Student Succeeds Act included a reauthorization of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers. While this was a monumental achievement, failing to properly fund these programs will result in many children losing access to them. According to the Afterschool Alliance, if 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers are funded at the current level requested by the President for Fiscal Year 2017, approximately 200,000 low-income children would lose access to critical afterschool programming.

We need to do better for children and parents. Afterschool programs keep kids safe, improve academic performance and help working families across America. Studies have shown that quality programs give students the academic, social and career-ready skills they need to succeed. Students who regularly attend have better grades and behavior in school, better peer relations and

emotion well-being, and lower incidences of drug-use, violence and unintended pregnancy. For example, research in 2011 and 2012 from several state education departments found that teachers report that students regularly participating in 21st Century Community Learning Centers show improvements in homework completion, class participation, attendance, behavior in class, and reading and math achievement scores and grades. A separate 2013 study out of University of California, Irvine's School of Education found that regular participation in afterschool programs helped to narrow the achievement gap between high-income and low-income students in math, improved academic and behavioral outcomes and reduced school absences.

Support for federal funding for afterschool programs is deep, enduring and bipartisan. Even in this tight fiscal environment, Americans recognize the need to continue supporting these critical programs. We appreciate the challenging situation you face with the Fiscal Year 2017 Labor, Health, and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations bill and thank you for your consideration of this matter.

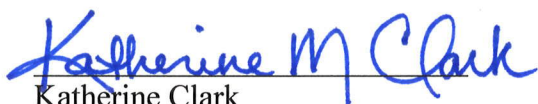
Sincerely,



David N. Cicilline  
*Member of Congress*



Lou Barletta  
*Member of Congress*




Katherine Clark  
*Member of Congress*



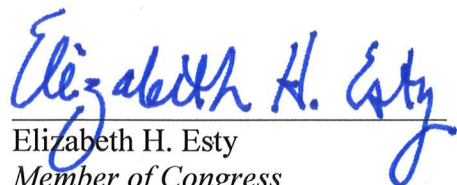
Chellie Pingree  
*Member of Congress*



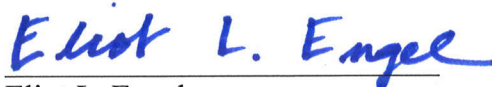
Yvette D. Clarke  
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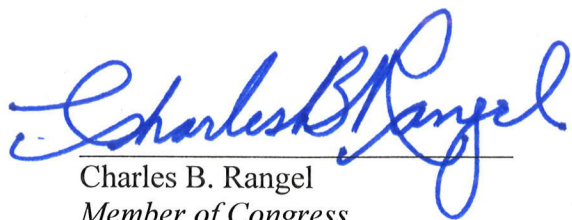
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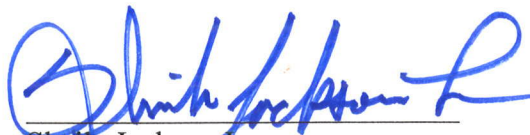


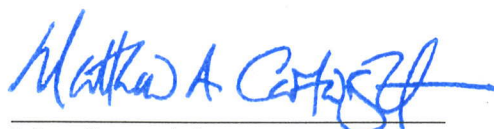
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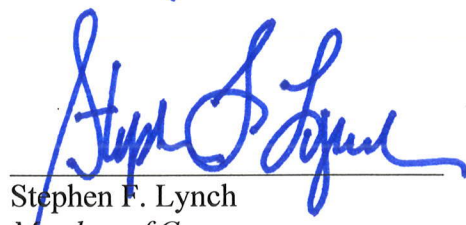
  
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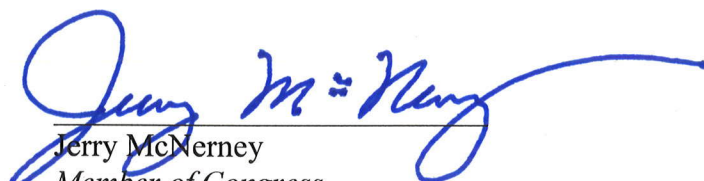
  
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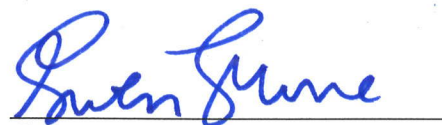
  
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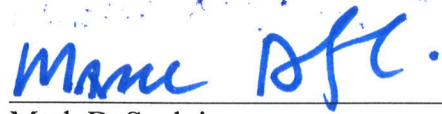
  
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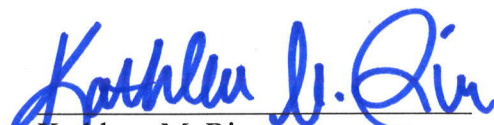
  
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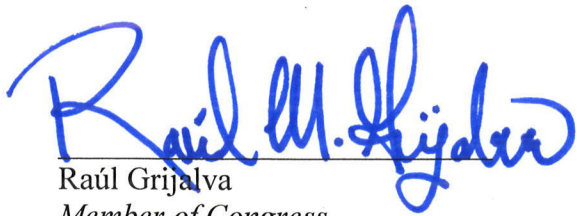
  
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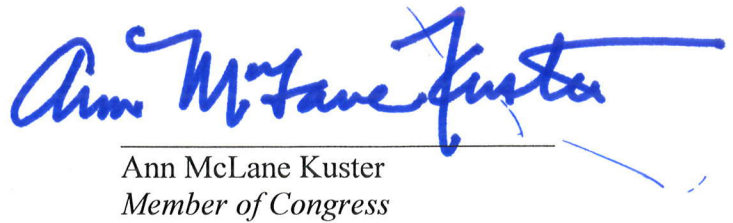
  
Mark DeSaulnier  
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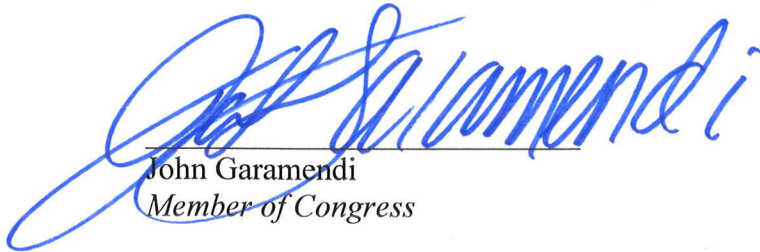
  
Kathleen M. Rice  
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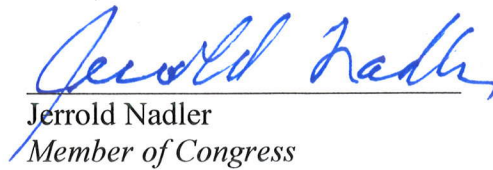
  
Chris Van Hollen  
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Filemon Vela  
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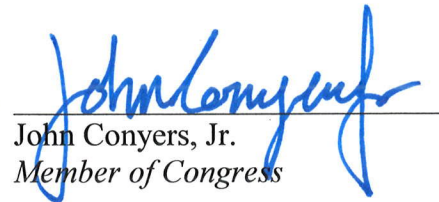
  
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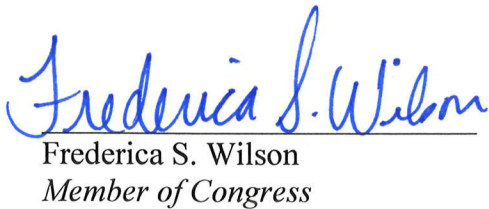
  
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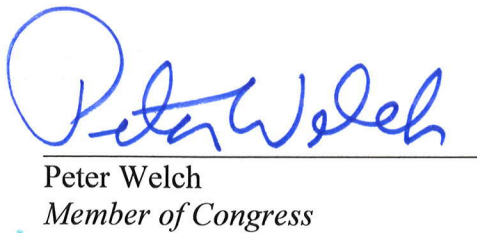
  
Jerrold Nadler  
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John Conyers, Jr.  
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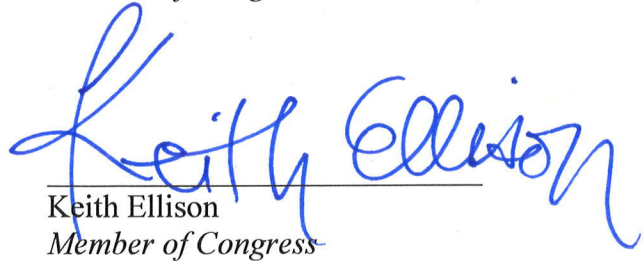
  
Frederica S. Wilson  
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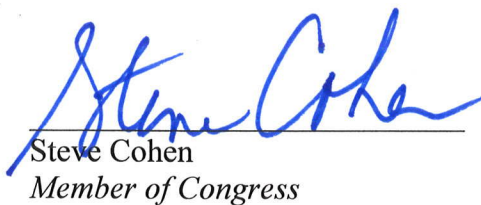
  
Hakeem Jeffries  
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Peter Welch  
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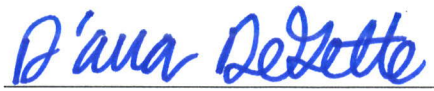
  
Chris Gibson  
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Keith Ellison  
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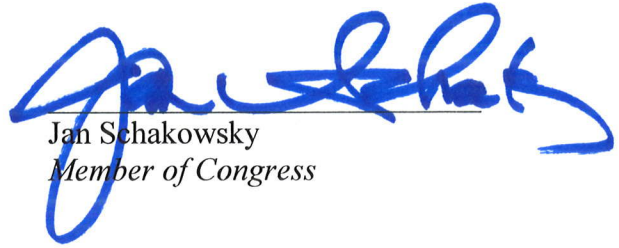
  
Steve Cohen  
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Debbie Dingell  
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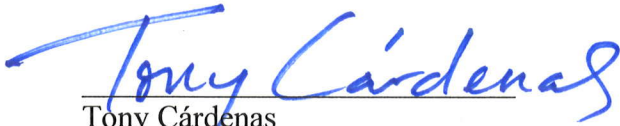




Diana DeGette  
*Member of Congress*



Jan Schakowsky  
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Tony Cárdenas  
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