



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **In Powerful Show of Support, Bipartisan Members of Congress, Diverse Organizations Urge Appropriators to Reject President’s Proposal to End Afterschool Funding**

WASHINGTON, DC — The nation’s leading afterschool advocacy organization today released a letter signed by 1,454 organizations — 139 national, and 1,315 state and local — calling on House and Senate appropriators to reject President Trump’s call to end federal funding for afterschool programs and instead fund 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) at or above its current level of \$1.167 billion. At the same time, the organization applauded a bipartisan letter with a similar message, sent to House Appropriations Committee leaders by 81 members of Congress – double the number of members of Congress who signed a similar letter last year.

“Quality afterschool and summer learning programs are vital to communities across the nation,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant in releasing the letter. “The idea that the federal government would abandon the students and families that rely on afterschool is unthinkable. President Trump’s misguided proposal to eliminate 21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers has triggered a tidal wave of opposition that’s reflected by the diverse and powerful voices that are calling on Congress to continue – or increase – federal funding for afterschool. This funding directly supports afterschool programs for 1.6 million children across the country.”

National signers of the letter include youth-serving organizations, education groups, unions and advocacy organizations focused on hunger, fitness, gender equity, health, the arts and law enforcement, among others. The list was signed by the American Federation of Teachers, American Heart Association, Boys & Girls Clubs of America, FBI National Academies, Girl Scouts of the USA, National Association of State Boards of Education, National Education Association, National League of Cities, National PTA, NETWORK Lobby for Catholic Social Justice, STEM Education Coalition, United Way Worldwide and YMCA of the USA. The list of state and local organizational signers is similarly broad, with signers from all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The letter is addressed to the chairs and ranking members of key appropriations subcommittees in the House and Senate.

“In every state and almost every Congressional district,” the organizations write, “21st Century Community Learning Center funding supports afterschool and summer learning programs that offer locally based school and community solutions that keep children and teenagers safe, inspire young people to learn and support working families.” The organizations call on appropriators “to

provide at least \$1.167 billion” for 21<sup>st</sup> CCLC. The letter was organized by the Afterschool Alliance.

The Afterschool Alliance also applauded a “Dear Colleague” letter to Reps. Tom Cole (R-OK) and Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) that was signed by 81 Members of Congress. It calls for “funding of no less than \$1.167 billion” for 21st CCLC. Organized by Reps. Lou Barletta (R-PA) and David Cicilline (D-RI), the letter notes that a meta-analysis of 75 studies by the Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning concludes that afterschool students showed improved behavior and performed better academically than students who did not participate in afterschool. It says, “More and more working families rely on 21st CCLCs each year to ensure their children are in a safe environment during non-school hours, allowing them to excel in their jobs.”

“It’s clear from these two letters that policymakers, educators, parents and a wide variety of organizations, including those focused on health, law enforcement, science education, arts and more, recognize the tremendous value afterschool programs provide,” said Grant. “The President’s proposal to eliminate 21st CCLC doesn’t have any more traction around the country than it does here in Washington. It is up to Congress to make sure the federal budget reflects this clearly expressed demand for continued, even increased, federal support for afterschool.”

The full text and signers of the letter from organizations is [here](#). The “Dear Colleague” letter and signers is [here](#).

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*The Afterschool Alliance is a nonprofit public awareness and advocacy organization working to ensure that all children and youth have access to quality afterschool programs. More information is available at [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org).*