



NEWS RELEASE  
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## **Afterschool Advocates from 42 States Are Calling on Congress Today to Reject Trump Administration Proposal to End Federal Funding for Afterschool, Summer Learning Programs**

Washington, D.C. – More than 200 afterschool providers, community leaders, educators, parents and youth from 42 states are on Capitol Hill today to educate Congress about the urgent need to preserve funding for the quality afterschool and summer learning programs that keep children safe, inspire them to learn and give working parents peace of mind. The 18<sup>th</sup> annual [Afterschool for All Challenge](#), sponsored by the Afterschool Alliance, is taking place at a time when the Trump administration is proposing to eliminate all funds for [21<sup>st</sup> Century Community Learning Centers](#), the primary federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs.

In addition to face-to-face meetings on Capitol Hill, thousands of advocates will be [taking action from home](#), calling their senators and representatives to discuss the harm that ending funding for afterschool programs would cause, and making their voices heard on social media.

A kick-off event on Capitol Hill Tuesday afternoon showcased afterschool activities from several programs. U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) spoke, emphasizing the importance of afterschool opportunities for young people. He congratulated participants at the event and thanked longtime champions of afterschool, both on and off the Hill, including Afterschool Alliance Board Chair Terry K. Peterson.

U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) also congratulated the assembled afterschool supporters for their advocacy efforts, noting that the range of afterschool activities demonstrated in the showcase were “a reminder of what we’re doing to keep young people active and engaged, to keep those brains firing, because when the school day is over at 3:00 that doesn’t mean that the learning stops; that doesn’t mean that the caring stops.... These programs are so much to so many.” Noting that “it takes a lot to ensure” that afterschool programs continue, she concluded that “Our responsibility, each one of us, is to embrace ... the good and bring out the extraordinary potential in our young people.... Year in, year out, know that you can count on me.”

Rep. Donna Shalala (D-FL) said that “Afterschool programs are absolutely critical... They’re an investment in the future and in American businesses.... I think that American business has come to understand workers, men and women, who know that their children are safe and in a productive, safe setting can work a full day.”

Rep. Don Young (R-AK) thanked the afterschool providers in the room for their work. “Our youth, our school kids, are sometimes forgotten after the bell rings.... And what you do ... is so

important,” he said. “We have an awful lot of good students,” he continued, and “they just need a little help sometimes. That makes me confident about the future of this great nation of ours.”

The event also included remarks by afterschool students from Austin, Texas; Eldon, Missouri; and Mountain Home, Idaho, discussing what their afterschool programs mean to them. In addition, several afterschool programs were showcased, including programs from Washington, D.C.; Baltimore and Takoma Park, Maryland; Jim Thorpe, Pennsylvania; Greenville and Fort Worth, Texas; and Hampton, Virginia.

“Across the country, afterschool and summer learning programs are keeping children safe, inspiring them to learn, and helping working families,” Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant told the crowd. “Afterschool programs offer everything from STEM (science, technology, engineering and math) opportunities to health and wellness, from service opportunities to music and the arts. Unfortunately, federal support for afterschool and summer learning programs has never faced the kind of sustained threat that it does today, with the White House renewing its push to eliminate afterschool funding. That’s why hundreds of advocates have traveled to Washington this week: to defend afterschool and summer learning for children. We need to increase public and private funding, so all students can take advantage of the opportunities afterschool and summer learning programs provide.”

Participation in afterschool programs has increased to 10.2 million students nationwide, up from 6.5 million in 2004, according to [the America After 3PM household survey](#) of 30,000 U.S. families, commissioned by the Afterschool Alliance. But the unmet demand for afterschool programs has increased as well. Today, for every child in an afterschool program, there are two more whose parents say they would participate, if a program were available. One in five students in the country today is unsupervised after the school day ends.

The Afterschool Alliance is grateful to Capital One for its sponsorship of the 2019 Afterschool for All Challenge.

*Note: To arrange an interview with an afterschool provider from a particular state, please contact [Lisa Lederer](#) at 202/371-1999.*

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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).*