



NEWS RELEASE
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CONTACT: [Luci Manning](#)
202/371-1999

Afterschool Advocates from All 50 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 every state 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 17th 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 [21st Century Community Learning Centers](#), the primary federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs.

Advocates are also [participating in the Afterschool for All Challenge from home today](#), calling their senators and representatives to discuss the harm that ending funding for afterschool programs would cause.

At a kick-off event yesterday afternoon, U.S. Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK) congratulated the afterschool supporters for their advocacy, noting that programs “take the stress and panic” out of the afternoon hours for millions of parents, who might otherwise be worried about their kids. Noting that many families struggle with addiction and many grandparents are raising their grandchildren, Sen. Murkowski talked about “the love and care that comes when you know your children are in a safe setting” like an afterschool program.

“I’m proud of the work I’ve done on behalf of afterschool programs with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle,” Rep. Lou Barletta (R-PA), who co-chairs the House Afterschool Caucus, said. “I look forward to continuing to advocate for programs like SHINE,” a highly successful afterschool program based in Pennsylvania’s Carbon, Luzerne and Schuylkill counties.

Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI), who serves on the Afterschool Alliance’s board of directors, told the gathering that “our greatest responsibility for our children is to create high-quality, engaging afterschool programs... I am proud to say there’s a lot of bipartisanship in support of afterschool.”

“I understand how important these programs are for not only our families,” Rep. Andy Harris (R-MD) assured the crowd. “They [also] are vital to our communities and to the workforce of the 21st Century.”

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-VA) added, “3 – 6 pm is a time frame when young people can get into mischief... Young people have better options because of your work.”

The kick-off event was a showcase that also featured remarks by afterschool program students from Camdenton, Missouri; Stratford, Oklahoma; Toppenish and Walla Walla, Washington; and Green Bay, Wisconsin, discussing what their afterschool programs mean to them. The students created videos, photo projects and a virtual reality tour focused on how their afterschool programs support students.

“From STEM (science, technology, education and math) to fitness to community service to health and the arts, and much more, quality afterschool and summer learning programs provide safe places for students to explore their interests and learn,” said Afterschool Alliance Executive Director Jodi Grant. “With federal funding for these essential programs at risk, it is more important than ever for Congress to hear directly from educators, program providers, parents and young people themselves about the devastating impact eliminating this funding would have on families and communities. 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.

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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.