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## **Level Funding for 21st CCLC By Key Senate Committee Is 'Bipartisan Embrace of Afterschool Programs'**

*Statement of Jodi Grant, Executive Director, Afterschool Alliance*

“Today’s Senate Appropriations Committee vote to hold funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative steady at \$1.2 billion is welcome news to children, families, educators, community leaders and others who rely on afterschool programs. It is also a resounding rejection of the White House’s ill-advised push to eliminate the principal federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs. We commend Labor-HHS Subcommittee Chairman Roy Blunt (R-Missouri) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-Wash.), as well as full Appropriations Committee Chair Richard Shelby (R-Ala.) and Ranking Member Patrick Leahy (D-Vermont), for their leadership in this bipartisan embrace of afterschool programs.

President Trump proposed eliminating 21st CCLC in his FY19 budget, which would have caused real harm to the millions of children and families that rely on afterschool programs to keep kids safe, inspire them to learn and give their parents peace of mind. Last year, Congress soundly rejected a similar proposal from the President and both the Senate and House appear on track to do the same this year. The message from Congress to the White House on afterschool funding should be clear.

The message from afterschool supporters around the nation has been similarly powerful. By the thousands, they’ve let Congress know that afterschool programs are vital to their communities. To their credit, Members of Congress have heeded the message.

Those same communities and families will continue to voice their support for afterschool in the weeks and months to come, as Congress moves toward a final budget bill. As important as the Appropriations Committee’s vote is, the hard truth is that too many children have no afterschool program available to them. For every child now in an afterschool program, [two more are waiting to get in](#). One reason is that the federal investment in afterschool is not nearly what it should be.

For that reason, we will continue to mobilize all those who support and rely on afterschool. Together, we will defeat the President’s attacks on afterschool this year, and work toward increased federal support in the years to come. We owe it to our children and our country.”

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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).*