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## **House Subcommittee’s Vote to Increase Funding ‘Reflects the Strong, Bipartisan National Consensus that Afterschool Programs Work’**

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

“Today’s vote by the House Appropriation Labor-HHS Subcommittee to increase funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21<sup>st</sup> CCLC) initiative by \$100 million is a resounding rejection of the White House’s three-year effort to eliminate the nation’s principal federal funding stream for afterschool and summer learning programs. It reflects a strong, bipartisan consensus in our nation that afterschool programs work for children, families and communities. We thank Subcommittee Chair Rep. Rosa DeLauro for her tireless work to increase afterschool funding.

As part of his FY 2020 budget proposal, President Trump again proposed eliminating 21st CCLC this year – a plan that would have denied afterschool and summer learning programs to more than 1.7 million children across the nation. The proposal would have been devastating for families, schools and communities that rely on these programs. Congress and the public have rejected the President’s proposal the last two years, and today’s vote is an indication that the House of Representatives will reject it again. We hope and expect the Senate to do so as well.

Since the President began his campaign to de-fund afterschool programs, Members of Congress have heard from tens of thousands of families, educators, business leaders, police chiefs, religious leaders and others, urging continued support for afterschool. In March, a broad spectrum of local, state and national organizations representing all 50 states sent a joint letter of support to House LHHS Appropriations Subcommittee Chairwoman Rosa DeLauro (D-CT) and Ranking Member Tom Cole (R-OK) calling for an increase in 21st Century Community Learning Centers funding. In addition, Congress received more than 15,000 calls and emails in March supporting federal afterschool and summer learning funds.

In addition to Rep. DeLauro, we’re deeply grateful to Appropriations Committee Chair Nita Lowey (D-NY) for her leadership in defense of afterschool and summer learning programs. We also thank Reps. David Cicilline (D-RI) and Don Young (R-AK), who in March organized a bipartisan Dear Colleague letter signed by 106 members of Congress calling for ‘support [for] funding for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (21st CCLC) Program.’

The subcommittee vote is an important step in securing federal support for afterschool and summer learning programs for the coming fiscal year, but there's more work to do. As we did in each of the last two years, the Afterschool Alliance will work with lawmakers on both sides of the aisle to protect afterschool from misguided efforts to undercut it. The nation's current federal investment in afterschool is modest, but crucial to families and communities, providing afterschool to 1.7 million children. But the investment is nowhere near what it should be if we are to make sure every child who needs an afterschool program has one. For every child now in an afterschool program, [two more are waiting to get in](#).

We will continue to mobilize the millions of Americans who support and rely on afterschool. Children and families across the nation deserve no less.”

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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).*