

November 29, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services, Education
Appropriations Subcommittee
United States House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Blunt and Cole and Ranking Members Murray and DeLauro:

As you finalize your fiscal year (FY) 2018 bill, the undersigned organizations that serve and advocate for older Americans respectfully ask that you **maintain funding for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP) at no less than \$400 million for FY 2018**, as recommended in the U.S. Senate bill.

SCSEP is a critical component in our country's workforce development strategy. The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) program helps unemployed older adults develop new skills and work experiences through work-based learning assignments in their communities. Despite entering the program with multiple barriers to employment, thousands of older adults from every state found jobs last year through SCSEP and are now contributing to the workforces of the nearly 5,400 private and public sector employers who recently hired SCSEP participants. In addition to exceeding its entered employment rate, SCSEP eclipsed its federal performance goals for employment retention and six-month average earnings.¹

We were pleased that both the House and Senate appropriations bills maintained this valuable employment program, as recommended in last year's bipartisan SCSEP reauthorization (P.L. 114-144). However, the significant cut proposed in the House bill would mean about 15,000 fewer older adults would receive SCSEP employment services next year. This proposed cut is especially troubling considering last year's 8 percent cut and with new federal costs associated with the Workforce Innovation Opportunity Act (WIOA) requirement to contribute toward American Job Center infrastructure expenses. Increased funding would help SCSEP meet new WIOA-related costs and the growing demand among eligible unemployed older adults.²

We hope you will continue to support the employment and job training needs of older Americans by funding SCSEP at no less than \$400 million in FY 2018. Last year, Congress extended SCSEP through the bipartisan Older Americans Act (P.L. 114-144) and recommended the program be funded at \$454,499,494 in FY 2018

¹ U.S. Department of Labor, Fiscal Year 2018 [Congressional Budget Justification](#)

² Urban Institute The Role of SCSEP in Workforce Training for Low-Income Older Workers [White Paper](#)

Thank you for your consideration. Please do not hesitate to contact any of our organizations if you seek additional information about SCSEP. If you have further questions, please contact Maynard Friesz at 202-403-8345 or mfriesz@easterseals.com.

Sincerely,

Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
Council for Adult and Experiential Learning
Easterseals
Goodwill Industries International, Inc.
Institute for Indian Development, Inc.
League of United Latin American Citizens
Lutheran Services in America
MANA, A National Latina Organization
Mature Services
Meals on Wheels America
National Able Network, Inc.
National Alliance for Partnerships in Equity (NAPE)
National Asian Pacific Center on Aging
National Association of Area Agencies on Aging
National Association of Development Organizations
National Association of Nutrition and Aging Services Programs (NANASP)
National Association of RSVP Directors
National Association of Social Workers (NASW)
National Association of States United for Aging and Disabilities
National Association for Hispanic Elderly
National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
National Council on Aging
National Farmers Union
National Latina/o Psychological Association
National Senior Corps Association
National Skills Coalition
National Urban League
Operation A.B.L.E.
Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law
Senior Service America, Inc.
SER Jobs for Progress National Inc.
The Jewish Federations of North America
The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies
The Workplace
Women's Institute for a Secure Retirement (WISER)

Cc: The Honorable Thad Cochran, Chairman, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Rodney P. Frelinghuysen, Chairman, U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee
The Honorable Patrick Leahy, Ranking Member, U.S. Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Nita M. Lowey, Ranking Member, U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee