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Committee for Education Funding

April 1, 2014

Dear Budget Committee Member:

The Committee for Education Funding (CEF), a coalition of 114 national education associations and institutions representing early learning to postgraduate education, writes to express our **strong opposition to the Fiscal Year (FY) 2015 Budget Resolution as introduced by Chairman Ryan.**

This budget would devastate funding for education and make college less affordable by more than doubling the level of cuts required by the sequester starting in FY 2016, freezing the maximum Pell grant for ten years, eliminating almost \$100 billion in mandatory funding for Pell grants (which will almost certainly result in a substantial cut to the maximum award), increasing student indebtedness by eliminating the in-school interest subsidy for subsidized student loans, and narrowing eligibility for need-based student aid. It also eliminates all funding for public and school libraries, museums and the Corporation for National and Community Service.

The Ryan budget will cause irreparable harm to children, students, schools, libraries, museums and colleges and will undermine job creation, economic growth and global competitiveness by:

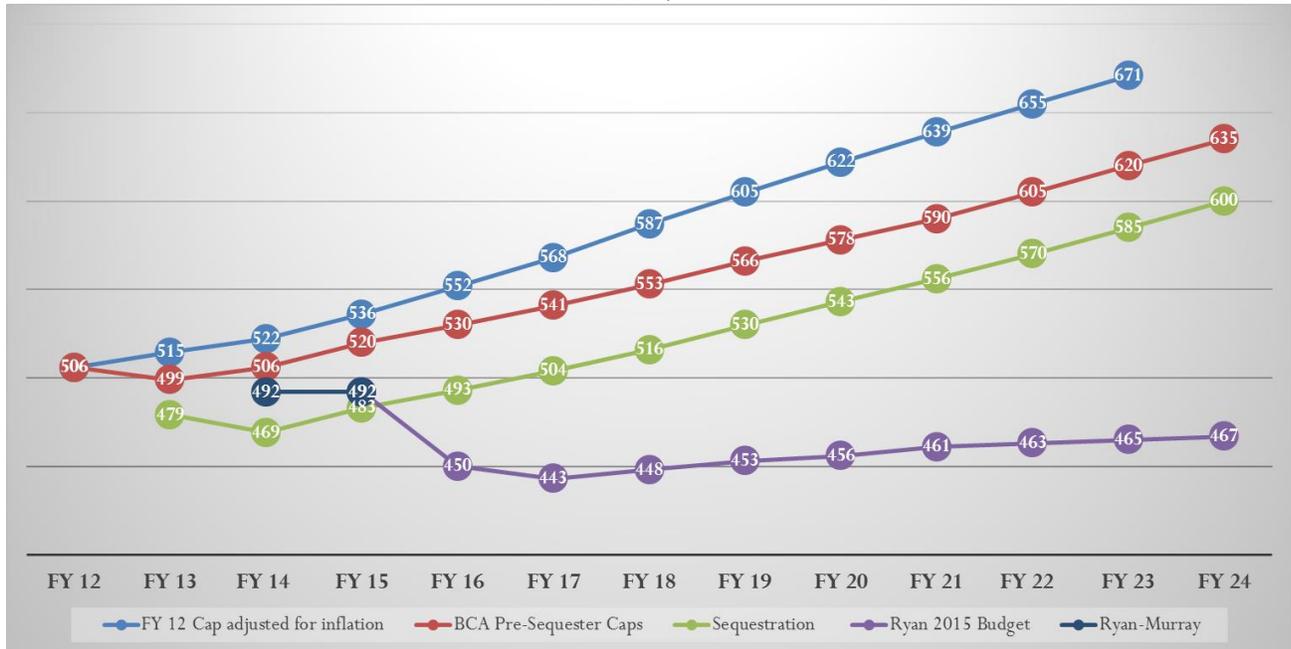
- moving our nation backward in efforts to close achievement gaps, improve overall student achievement, and increase high school graduation, college access and college completion rates;
- making postsecondary education more expensive for low- and middle-income families; and,
- stifling innovation by its cuts to scientific research.

Rather than a path to prosperity the proposed budget represents a road to ruin.

Overall, the Budget Resolution would cut nondefense discretionary (NDD) spending over ten years by \$791 billion below the post-sequester caps levels established in the Budget Control Act. While it adheres to the NDD cap for FY 2015 set by the Bipartisan Budget Act (BBA), in FY 2016 alone it cuts NDD spending by \$43 billion (-8.7%) below the sequester level. It then locks in these cuts for the succeeding eight years. Indeed, the level of funding in FY 2016 would be below the FY 2013 sequester level, completely reversing the benefits of the BBA.

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NDD Cap Levels in billions of \$



The cuts to NDD programs will actually be even worse, since the budget assumes the shift of \$7 billion in Pell grant mandatory funding in FY 2016 to this drastically reduced NDD pool of funds.

This budget will result in substantial cuts to critical programs including Title I aid to high-poverty schools; IDEA funds for students with disabilities; Impact Aid; teacher quality grants; after-school grants; charter and magnet school aid; English Language Acquisition grants; career, technical and adult education; campus-based student aid; aid to minority-serving institutions; TRIO and GEAR UP.

The need to increase the federal investment in education has never been greater. Jobs and the economy are directly linked to such investments. Both unemployment rates and lifetime earnings are based on levels of education attainment.

We support amendments that will be offered that restore these cuts and invest in education including:

- Rep. Tim Ryan to restore mandatory Pell grant funding
- Rep. Mark Pocan to eliminate the student loan cuts
- Rep. Jared Huffman to provide for mandatory funding for IDEA
- An expected amendment on early childhood education funding

Solving our nation's fiscal situation and reducing the debt can't and won't happen simply by slashing education and other nondefense discretionary spending. **We urge you to reject the Ryan budget and instead adopt a balanced approach to deficit reduction which protects education and nondefense discretionary programs from further cuts.**

Sincerely,

Kimberly Jones
President

Joel Packer
Executive Director