

July 11, 2017

Dear Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, and Representatives DelBene, Larsen, Herrera Beutler, Newhouse, McMorris Rodgers, Kilmer, Jayapal, Reichert, Smith and Heck:

As Congress begins its work on the FY 2018 budget, we are writing to urge you to ensure that funding is adequate to meet the needs of all people and communities. The undersigned are organizations from Washington including faith groups, human service providers, labor and civil rights organizations, and advocates and policy experts concerned with improving our nation's health, protecting our environment, supporting families, reducing poverty and hunger, strengthening our communities, and investing in economic growth and prosperity for all our people.

Our message to you is clear: there is no way to keep the promise of prosperity for all people in Washington and all Americans, including families with children, women, seniors, people with disabilities, communities of color, and others who are being left behind in the 21st century economy, without significantly increasing investments in public education, affordable housing, health and nutrition, public transit, roads and bridges, clean air, clean water, clean energy, child care, and other means of making investments in communities that also create good jobs. Rather than meeting these goals, President Trump's FY 2018 budget, however, proposes harsh reductions in all these areas, cutting domestic and international discretionary (NDD) programs \$54 billion below the current law's sequester cap and transferring those funds to the Pentagon. Washington relies on federal funding for 28 percent of its state budget. These proposed cuts would be devastating, and we urge you to oppose them.

Some of the most egregious examples of the pain that would be caused by the Trump budget cuts include:

- Denying medical care to well over 23 million people nationwide because the budget slashes Medicaid deeply, inflicting a 47 percent cut (\$1.6 **trillion**) through 2027. If the [restrictive caps](#) included in the budget were in place in Washington from 2001-2011, the state would have lost nearly \$400 million in federal Medicaid funds.
- Ending the federal commitment to provide a minimum basic food benefit through SNAP/food stamps, by shifting 25 percent of the cost to states. Washington would face a 10-year cost of over [\\$2.5 billion](#), but if such funds were not available, could instead cut benefits. In addition, [54,000 people in Washington](#), mostly elderly and people with disabilities, would lose SNAP benefits because the minimum benefit would be eliminated.
- Breaking the promise not to cut Social Security by slashing Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI) and Supplemental Security Income (SSI) by \$72 billion over 10 years. There were [261,421](#) working-age adults in Washington with disabilities receiving SSDI and/or SSI in December 2015, 5.8 percent of Washington's 18-64 year olds.
- Eliminating heating assistance for 73,967 people in Washington by cutting \$56.4 million from the state's Low-Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP).
- Reducing the number of rental vouchers for low-income families by 250,000 nationwide. That loss of rental assistance would be more than double the 2013 sequester cuts of 85,697 vouchers, which denied rental assistance to 1,504 families in Washington.
- Eliminating \$18.1 million for 21st Century Learning Grants to support before and afterschool care and summer programs for 18,058 children in Washington.
- Cutting Washington's state grant from the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) by 45%, a loss of \$9.77 million to fund efforts to implement environmental programs for clean water and clean air that protect public health.

- Cutting 27% of federal assistance to enable job training placements, cutting funds for 43,258 people in Washington.

Rather than budget cuts, we urge you to support a budget that is an engine for economic progress. It must provide enough funding for jobs and infrastructure programs, with targeted help for low-income communities and struggling individuals, including immigrants seeking a better life. A good budget will direct funds to job creation, not more incarceration; and ensure funding for programs that alleviate poverty, targeting funds to reduce disproportionate poverty among people of color, especially children.

All people in Washington State deserve the security of being able to sustain basic living standards. Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), Supplemental Security Income (SSI), unemployment insurance, and refundable tax credits for low-income people are essential programs that should be protected and improved, not cut. We urge you to reject structural limits to these programs such as block grants or per capita caps, restrictions in eligibility or benefits that deny assistance to people in need and only worsen barriers to stable employment.

Our national security depends on adequately funded protections against threats to public health, as well as protections against poverty, hunger and homelessness, without regard to race, ethnicity, gender, or immigrant status.

It is necessary, but not sufficient, to reject the extreme cuts in the Trump budget. FY 2017 funding shows the harm that comes from years of flat or reduced funding due to tight caps. Out of 168 program areas serving low-income people tracked by the Coalition on Human Needs, 135 were cut from FY's 2010 – 2017, taking inflation into account; 54 were cut by more than 25 percent. We must do better. At minimum, Congress must undo the unrealistic sequester cap on NDD programs and maintain the bipartisan commitment to parity in funding beyond the caps, matching any defense increase with the same amount for NDD programs. Further, cutting domestic programs to fund increases in military spending or tax cuts is wholly unacceptable. On the contrary, investments should increase to meet our nation's huge and growing unmet needs.

A responsible budget requires an increase in revenues from fair sources to fund needed investments. The President's call for more than \$5.5 trillion in tax reductions overwhelmingly benefits profitable corporations and wealthy individuals. The President's tax plan is not responsible, and its promise of unprecedented economic growth is not credible.

We also strongly urge you to reject the inclusion of reconciliation instructions in the budget resolution intended to force cuts and restrictions in programs that support basic living standards and instructions that would expedite unfair tax breaks for wealthy individuals and profitable corporations.

We also urge you to reject controversial ideological policy riders that threaten to stall the budget process, potentially preventing states and localities from receiving federal resources in a timely manner. Policy provisions of great consequence to workers, retirees, consumers, and the environment should receive thorough consideration by authorizing committees and not be slipped into spending bills.

Congress must produce a budget that moves us towards more opportunity for all, that safeguards and advances our basic living standards, and that protects our environment.

Sincerely,

Abused Deaf Women's Advocacy Services

Aerospace Machinists 751
AFGE Local 3937
AFT Washington
All In For Washington
Anti-Hunger & Nutrition Coalition
APIC Spokane Chapter
Asia Pacific Cultural Center
Asian Counseling and Referral Service
Asian Pacific Islanders Coalition King County
Asian Pacific Islanders Coalition Pierce County
Asian Pacific Islanders Coalition South Puget Sound Chapter
Asian Pacific Islanders Coalition Yakima County
Battle Ground Adventist Community Services
Bellingham Food Bank
Bellingham Housing Authority
Benton Franklin Community Action Committee
Blue Mountain Action Council
Bridgeport Community Food Bank
Casa Latina
CCS - Village Spirit Center
Centerstone of Seattle
Children's Alliance (WA)
Congregation for The Homeless
Des Moines Area Food Bank
Domestic Violence Services of Benton & Franklin Counties
Economic Opportunity Institute
Edmonds Food Bank
Enumclaw Food Bank
Faith Action Network
Ferndale Food Bank
Food Lifeline
Foothills Food Bank
Forks Abuse Program
Foundation for Healthy Generations
GRuB
Healthy Families of Clallam County
Home Trust of Skagit

IAM District 751 Retirement Club
IBEW 77
Immanuel Community Services
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, IAM District 751
International Community Health Services
IUOE Local Union 609
Jefferson Co Food Bank Assoc.
Jefferson County Farmers Markets
King County Housing Authority
King County Sexual Assault Resource Center
Legal Voice
LifeWire
Lower Valley Crisis and Support Services
Maple Valley Food Bank & Emergency Services
Marysville Community Food Bank
MDC - Metropolitan Development Council
Mercy Housing Northwest
Ministry Assisting Neighbors in Need with Agape
Multi-Service Center
National Council of Jewish Women Seattle Section
Northwest Fair Housing Alliance
Northwest Harvest
Northwest Health Law Advocates
Northwest Washington Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Nutrition First
NW Network of Bisexual, Trans, Lesbian & Gay Survivors of Abuse
Olympic Community Action Programs
OneAmerica
Orting Food Bank
Pane d'Amore
Pierce County Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Plymouth Housing Group
Port Orchard Farmers Market
Professional & Technical Employees, Local 17
Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action
Quaker Voice on Washington Public Policy
Refugee & Immigrant services NW

RESULTS Kitsap
RESULTS Tacoma Washington
Retired Public Employees Council of WA
SAGE
Seattle Housing Authority
Seattle Human Services Coalition
SEIU 775
SEIU Healthcare 1199NW
SEIU6 Property Services NW
Snohomish Community Food Bank
Snohomish County APIC
Snohomish County Labor Council
Solid Ground
South King County Food Coalition
South Puget Sound -Asian Pacific Islander Coalition (APIC)
SpringRain Farm & Orchard
Sravasti Abbey
St. James Cathedral
St. Leo Food Connection
Statewide Poverty Action Network
Sustainable South Sound
Tacoma Community House
Tacoma NOW
The DOVE Project
The Food Bank @ St. Mary's
The Mockingbird Society
Toppenish Community Chest
Triumph Treatment Services
Tukwila Pantry
UFCW Local 367
United Faculty of Washington State
University District Food Bank
WA Federation of State Employees/AFSCME Council 28
WA State Alliance for Retired Americans
WA State Farmers Market Association
Walla Walla Housing Authority
Washington Association of Community & Migrant Health Centers

Washington Association of Early Education
Washington Building Trades
Washington CAN!
Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Programs
Washington Conservation Voters
Washington Environmental Council
Washington Food Coalition
Washington Low Income Housing Alliance
Washington Public Employees Association, UFCW local 365
Washington State Budget and Policy Center
Washington State Coalition Against Domestic Violence (WSCADV)
Washington State Community Action Partnership
Washington State Council of County and City Employees
Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO
Washington State Nurses Association
Washington State Public Health Association
Whatcom Anti-Hunger Coalition
Whitman County Food Coalition
Yakima Rotary Food Bank
YouthCare
YWCA of Spokane
YWCA Olympia
YWCA Pierce County
YWCA Seattle|King|Snohomish