

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 28, 2019

The Honorable Nita Lowey, Chairwoman
House Appropriations Committee
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
2368-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole, Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, and Education
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole,

We are writing to urge you to prioritize funding for Head Start, including funding to address the impact of Adverse Child Experiences (ACEs) on our nation's youngest learners, in the Fiscal Year 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill. **Specifically, we request at least \$11,113,095,000 for Head Start.** This increase in funding includes a cost of living adjustment as well as additional funds for the Quality Improvement Fund (QIF), as authorized by the 2007 Head Start Act.

Head Start offers education, health and nutrition services to economically disadvantaged children, as well as parenting and employment supports to their parents. Increased funding for Head Start is a wise and cost-effective investment in families and local communities. Research has amply demonstrated that high quality early childhood education programs generate a significant return on investment, and that the advantages of Head Start can last a lifetime.

After nearly a decade of implementing changes directed by the bipartisan Improving Head Start for School Readiness Act of 2007, Head Start programs are continuing to see this legislation's significant impacts in their work with our nation's most vulnerable children. Through educational, health, and comprehensive social services to children and families, Head Start promotes healthy development, school readiness, and lifetime success. It does so by tailoring high quality services to each community and family's local preferences and priorities. Numerous reports released over the past few years clearly demonstrate Head Start's success.

Standards of excellence and continuous improvement require a greater investment in a quality workforce. In FY20, as in each of the past six years, Head Start programs will strain to pay competitive wages and retain highly qualified staff. *Without* the funds we request, the realities of our competitive economy will require programs to choose between cutting access for children or risk losing staff and failing to meet requirements that improve services for children, families, and communities. *With* the funds we request, Head Start programs will be able to support their staff

and continue to deliver a renewed focus on strengthening evidence-based practices, effectively utilizing data, and implementing systems of continuous improvement in each Head Start program. These resources will ensure Head Start continues to deliver opportunities for success in school and life to our most vulnerable children and continues to be a critical investment in America's future.

Vulnerable children are often the greatest victims of traumatic experiences such as community violence, poverty, family instability, or natural disasters. Unaddressed, these stressors lead to substantial lifelong challenges including significantly greater health risks and lower life expectancy. However, intervention at early stages not only benefits the child, but has cost savings throughout the educational, foster, and judicial systems. The opioid epidemic has resulted in instability for many families across the nation and Head Start plays a unique role in addressing the crisis. With targeted funding, Head Start will reduce the societal costs of any traumatic experience by helping trauma-exposed children "catch-up" to their peers while simultaneously supporting families.

In order to accomplish these goals our total funding request includes \$900,000,000 for the Quality Improvement Fund as authorized by the 2007 Head Start Act. This funding would be utilized for training staff on the principles of trauma-informed care and would help fund more mental health counselors. Additional funds will also help increase capacity and improve teacher-to-student child ratios in preschool classrooms.

For these reasons, we respectfully request that the FY 2020 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies seek to increase the current number of children and families served while strengthening programs' quality and ability to serve children and families devastated by the opioid crisis and other ACEs. We request that you make these necessary investments so that Head Start can continue to provide much-needed education, health and economic development services to America's most vulnerable children and families.

Sincerely,



Katherine Clark
Member of Congress



Donald M. Payne, Jr.
Member of Congress



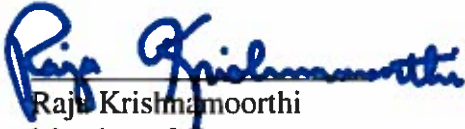
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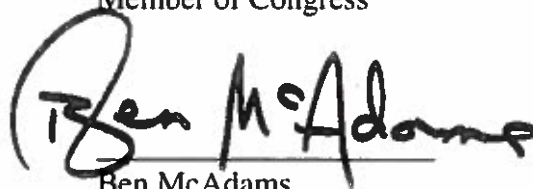
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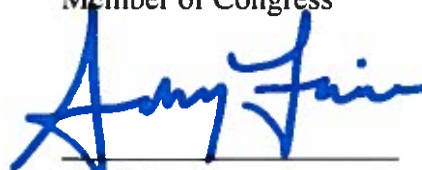
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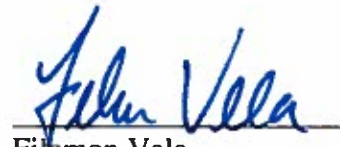



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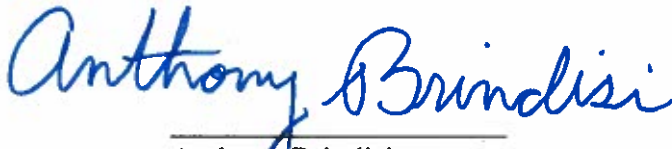

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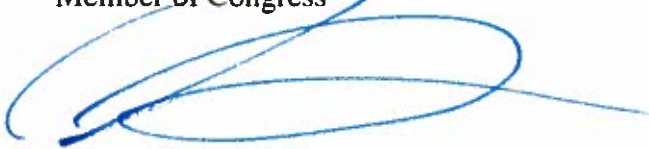
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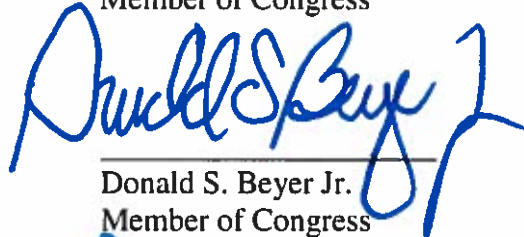
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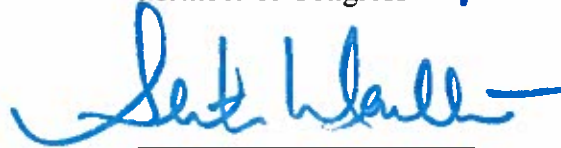
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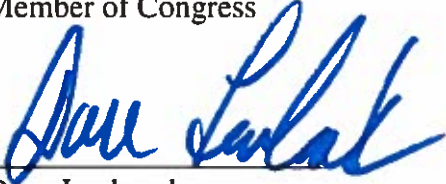
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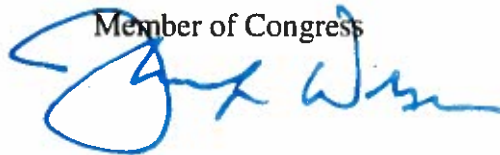
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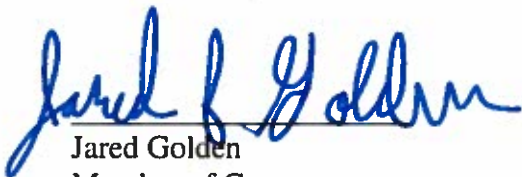
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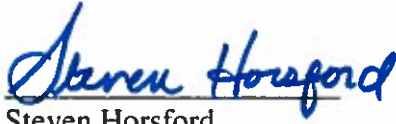
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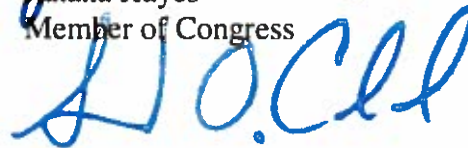
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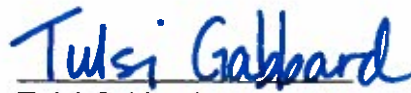
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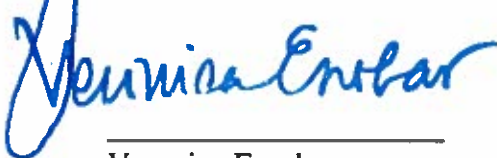
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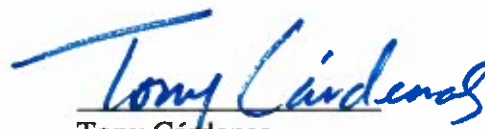
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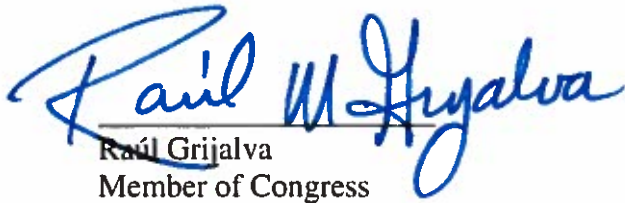
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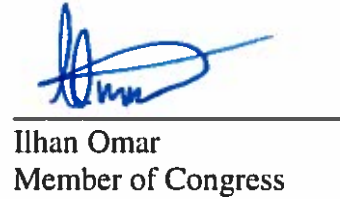


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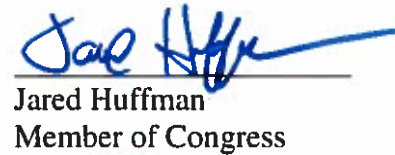

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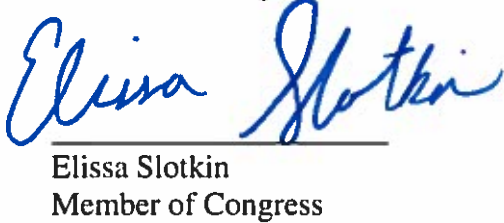

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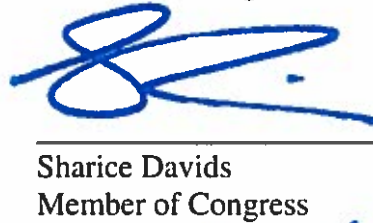

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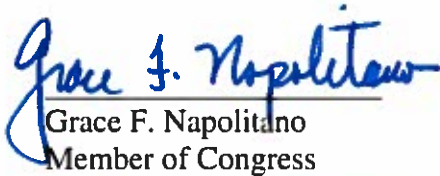

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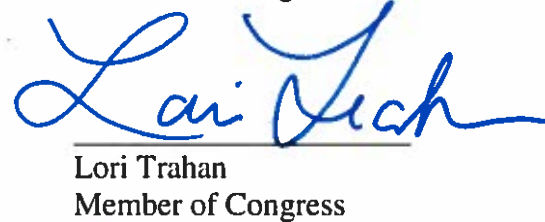

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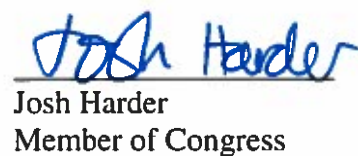

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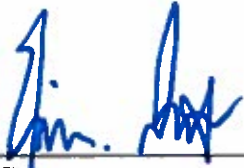

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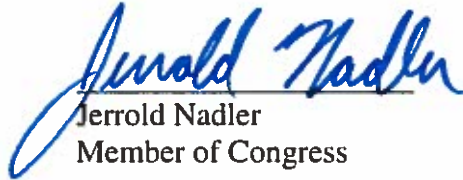
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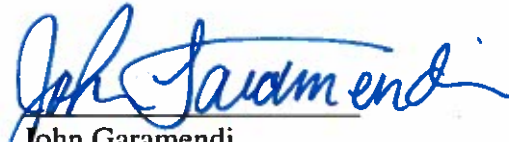
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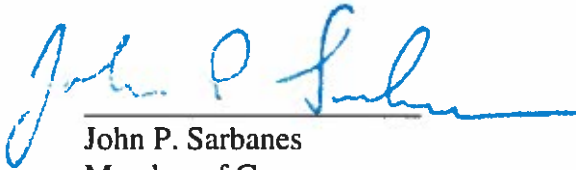
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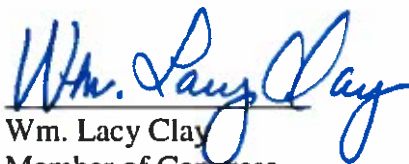
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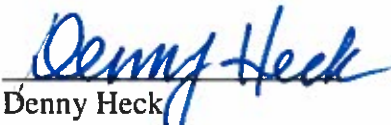
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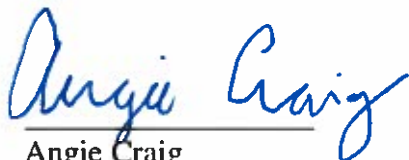
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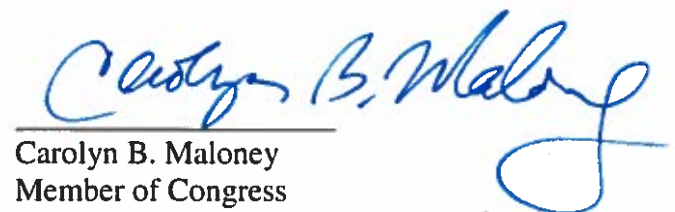
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