

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 5, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, D.C. 20500

The Honorable Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Ave SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear President Trump and Secretary Kennedy,

We express our strong opposition to President Donald J. Trump's reported¹ Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Presidential Budget that proposes the elimination of the Head Start program. A shutdown of Head Start programming would have devastating, far-reaching impacts for nearly half a million children, families and local communities. Over 800,000 children benefit from attending 17,000 Head Start Centers across the country, strengthening their early education and providing developmental screenings.²

Additionally, the National Head Start Association estimates that more than one million parents who use Head Start and Early Start centers would lose necessary child care³, impacting their ability to attend in-person work, causing further workforce disruptions. The impacts of these cuts would be generational and long-lasting.

Your Administration's overhaul of the U.S. Department of Education has already created great uncertainty for our public educators, administrators, students and families. The Department of Government Efficiency (DOGE)'s vast workforce reduction orders have already heavily impacted the Head Start program and have shown the devastating impacts that gutting these services would have on communities across our nation. After President Trump's executive order freezing previously appropriated federal grant funding, 45 Head Start preschools reported being locked out of the government website used to access their grant funding.⁴ Due to this funding pause, a clerical error by the Administration, numerous Head Start programs and centers were forced to close temporarily and lay off or furlough staff.

As we understand, the Administration's political intent is to abolish the Department of Education – which is already creating future funding concerns for state and local officials. Therefore, we remind the Administration that Head Start and Early Head Start programs use a federal-to-local funding model that allows these programs to be designed and administered locally to better meet the needs of each individual community. Defunding these

¹ Gecker, Jocelyn. [“White House proposes eliminating Head Start funding as part of sweeping budget cuts.”](#) The Associated Press, April 17, 2025.

² Schermele, Zachary. [“Exclusive: Trump budget proposal would fully eliminate Head Start.”](#) USA Today, April 14, 2025.

³ Vinci, Yasmina, the National Head Start Association. [“The Impact of Proposed Budget Cuts to Head Start.”](#)

⁴ Balingit, Moriah. [“Still locked out of federal funding, several Head Start preschools may need to close temporarily.”](#) The Associated Press, February 4, 2025.

programs will take local educational opportunities away in all 50 states, Washington, D.C. and several U.S. territories.

While we share the Administration's goal of rooting out waste and abuse in government, attempting to defund early education programming and indiscriminately attacking our nation's most vulnerable families is not the appropriate way to increase government efficiency.

Therefore, we request answers to the following questions by May 21, 2025:

1. Will the fully detailed FY26 Presidential Budget continue to support and fund Head Start programming, as was implied in the Administration's summarized proposal that was released on May 2, 2025?
2. If the Administration's federal education overhaul is implemented, how will Head Start remain federally and financially supported? Will the Trump Administration commit to fully supporting and protecting early education initiatives, such as Head Start?
3. How does your Administration plan to support parents whose work is disrupted by this projected funding decision and those who cannot afford private child care or support? Has the Administration considered the potential economic and workforce impact of these proposed cuts?
4. How many students in each state does your Administration estimate will be impacted by these cuts? What other early education or child care alternatives will your Administration provide to families impacted by these proposed cuts?
5. Has the Administration sought to identify alternatives for early education opportunities, particularly in rural communities?
6. How will the elimination of Head Start programming affect educators? How will your Administration support early educators, administrators and school districts if Head Start elimination increases enrollment rates?

We strongly urge your Administration to reconsider this fiscal decision before the upcoming FY26 Presidential Budget proposal is finalized. As Members of Congress, we remain committed to supporting educational opportunities for early learners and their families. We hope the Trump Administration will uphold these same values.

We appreciate your attention to this matter and look forward to your prompt response.

Sincerely,



Angie Craig
Member of Congress



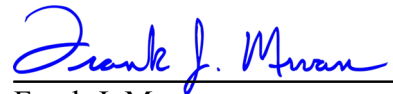
Joseph D. Morelle
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Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



John Garamendi
Member of Congress



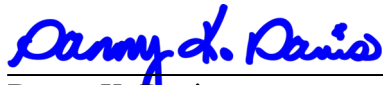
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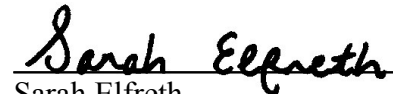
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Dina Titus
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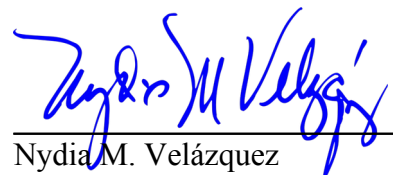
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



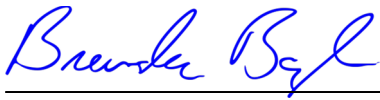
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Rashida Tlaib
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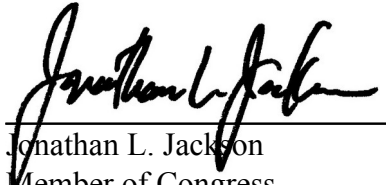
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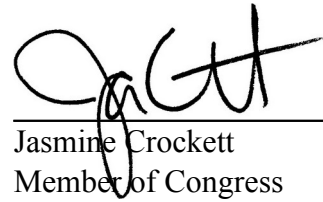
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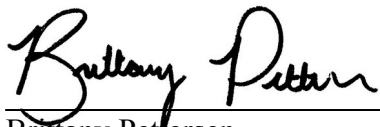
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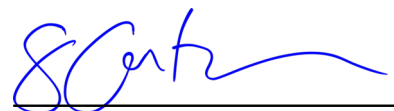
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Greg Landsman
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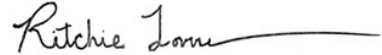
Richard E. Neal
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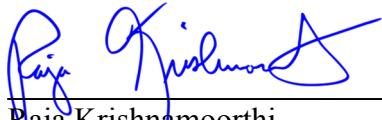
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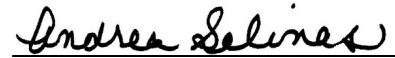
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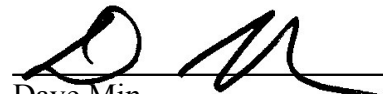
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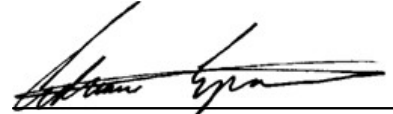
Cleo Fields
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Betty McCollum
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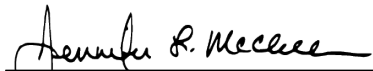
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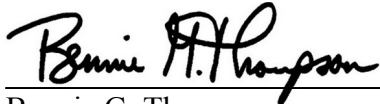
André Carson
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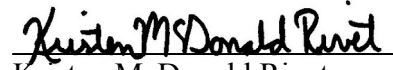
Jennifer L. McClellan
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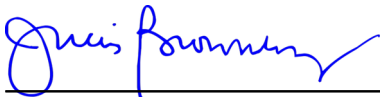
Eleanor Holmes Norton
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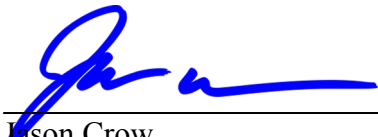
Marc A. Veasey
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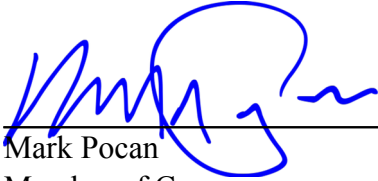
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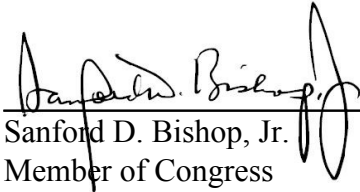
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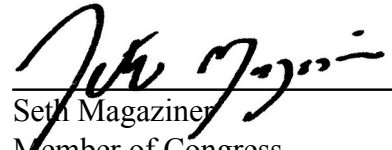
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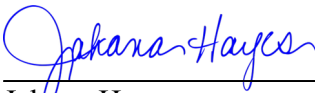
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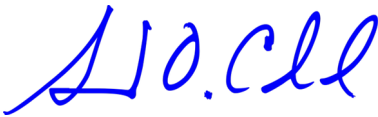
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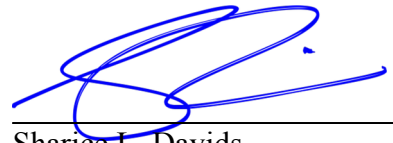
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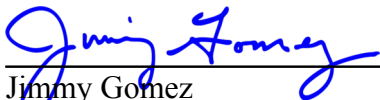
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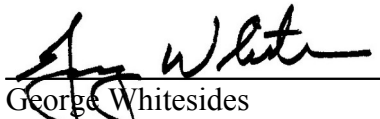
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Marilyn Strickland
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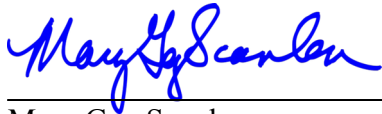
Zoe Lofgren
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Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



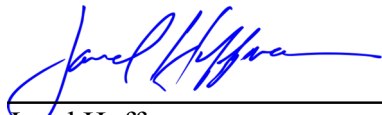
David Scott
Member of Congress



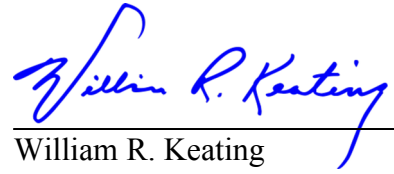
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Greg Stanton
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Jared Huffman
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William R. Keating
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Dwight Evans
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Summer L. Lee
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CC: Secretary Linda McMahon, U.S. Department of Education