

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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DIVERSE GROUPS JOIN TOGETHER TO AVERT SEQUESTRATION; PROTECT CORE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

Nearly 3,000 organizations make voice of nondefense discretionary programs heard.

The nondefense discretionary (NDD) community today delivered a [letter to Congress](#), urging leaders to avert sequestration by adopting a “balanced approach to deficit reduction that does not include further cuts to NDD programs.” Joining together in this effort are nearly 3,000 national, state, and local organizations from all fifty states representing the health, education, law enforcement, science, housing, workforce, transportation, and faith communities, among others. Despite their diverse priorities, these organizations share a common purpose of protecting the core government functions that make up NDD spending.

“NDD programs are provided by the government for the benefit of all Americans, even if they don’t realize it,” said Joel Packer, Executive Director of the Committee for Education Funding and spokesperson for this effort. “They support economic growth, strengthen safety and security, and enrich the lives of every American in every state and community across the nation.”

In 2011, NDD spending represented less than one-fifth of the federal budget and 4.3 percent of our country’s Gross Domestic Product (GDP). Under strict discretionary caps in the bipartisan Budget Control Act (BCA), by 2021 NDD spending will decline to just 2.8 percent of GDP, the lowest level in at least 50 years. If sequestration is allowed to take effect, cuts to NDD programs will be even deeper. The letter explains some of what Americans will lose if Congress and President Obama don’t avert sequestration through a balanced approach to deficit reduction:

Indiscriminate cuts threaten the entire range of bipartisan national priorities. For example, there will be fewer scientific and technological innovations, fewer teachers in classrooms, fewer job opportunities, fewer National Park visitor hours, fewer air traffic controllers, fewer food and drug inspectors, and fewer first responders.

“NDD programs are not the reason for our growing debt, and yet they are always the first place lawmakers look for cuts,” said Emily Holubowich, Executive Director of the Coalition for Health Funding and spokesperson for this effort. “Our goal is to speak with one voice in educating policymakers and the public about what NDD is, and its small and shrinking share of our federal budget and economy. When you do the math, you quickly realize even completely eliminating all NDD programs would still not balance the budget.”

The organizing body for this effort known as the “NDD Summit” is comprised of 60 delegates representing the breadth of diverse interests in NDD programs. The NDD Summit will serve as a forum for coordinating efforts to educate the public and policymakers on the importance of NDD and to protect these programs from additional cuts.

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