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COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION
AND THE WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

2181 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
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July 25, 2012

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The Honorable John Kline
Chairman
Committee on Education and the Workforce
U.S. House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515-6100

Dear Chairman Kline:

I write to respectfully request a hearing on the potential impact of sequestration on programs within the Committee on Education and the Workforce's jurisdiction, on the individuals and families served by those programs, and on the economy. As you know, if Congress doesn't chart a different fiscal path, federal programs will see cuts of approximately 8 percent at a time when our economy needs federal support, not abandonment.

Much has been said of the impact of sequestration on civilian and military jobs in the defense industry, but, as Acting Director of the Office of Management and Budget Jeffrey Zeints has pointed out, "less attention has been paid to its equally harsh effects on domestic programs." Educational programs, for example, sit squarely within those crosshairs. Those programs not only aim to give all children an equal opportunity to succeed. They also are critical to the long-term strength of our economy. Earlier this year, the Council on Foreign Relations released a report entitled, "U.S. Education Reform and National Security." The report found that failures in America's education system pose threats to national security, including to economic growth and competitiveness.

Today U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education on the devastating cuts that would be made to education under sequestration. He explained: "The long-term impact of sequestration could be even more damaging, as it would jeopardize our Nation's ability to develop and support an educated, skilled workforce that can compete in the global economy. Indeed, it would be hard to overstate the devastating impact of sequestration as a signal not just to the Nation, but to the world, that we are no longer able or willing to prioritize

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investment in the best guarantee of our future success and prosperity: the education of our children.”

The concerns of Acting Director Zients and Secretary Duncan have been backed up by recent analysis that sequestration will result in:

- Eliminating 100,000 slots in Head Start programs;
- Denying 80,000 families child care assistance through the CCDBG program;
- Cutting nearly \$1 billion in IDEA funds, impacting nearly 500,000 children with disabilities;
- Cutting over \$1 billion in funds for low-income schools through Title I, impacting nearly two million children; and
- Eliminating over 80,000 jobs in early, elementary and secondary and higher education.

Behind the numbers are real impacts on individuals and families. These programs mean a safe child care setting or the retention of a child’s teacher or a family’s ability to send a child to college or a worker’s opportunity to retrain and get back to work.

It is equally important to understand the impact of sequestration on Department of Labor programs. The Department is responsible for, among other things, protecting workers’ health and safety, enforcing minimum wage and overtime laws, providing employment and training services, and ensuring workers’ health and retirement plan security.

Congress has a responsibility under the Budget Control Act to put forward a fair, balanced and responsible fiscal plan for the nation. To avoid the fiscal cliff, choices will have to be made. The stakes are high for workers, families and children. I ask that our committee convene a hearing as soon as possible to understand the full impact of sequestration on programs within our jurisdiction.

I appreciate your timely consideration of this request.

Sincerely,



GEORGE MILLER

Senior Democratic Member