

Corporation for National and Community Service

The Republican Labor-HHS-Education appropriations bill proposes to completely and immediately shut down the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS) as an agency and preserves funding for only a select few senior corps programs.

Chairman Rehberg's bill dissolves the CNCS altogether, slashing funding by \$777 million, or 74 percent below current funding levels. The remaining \$271 million is allocated to continue just three programs: Foster Grandparents, Senior Companions and Retired Senior Volunteers. It also includes \$64 million to support the process of shutting down the agency. The list of eliminated programs includes AmeriCorps, VISTA, the National Civilian Community Corps, the Volunteer Generation Fund, and the Social Innovation Fund. In these challenging times, national service is a critical and cost-effective method to engage millions of citizens in solving problems in their communities. The draft report accompanying the subcommittee bill offers no rationale or justification for a decision to dismantle and discontinue this broadly supported federal agency.

With the exception of the three Senior Corps programs singled out for continuation, all other national service activities are terminated, undermining vital support provided every day to organizations like Teach for America, Boys and Girls Clubs, Lutheran Social Services, Catholic Volunteer Network and thousands of other faith-based and community organizations.

The impact of Chairman Rehberg's proposal will be significant, removing 80,000 AmeriCorps members from community service. As a result, more than 745,000 medically underserved children and adults would be left without health outreach and immunizations, more than 3 million at-risk children without a tutor, mentor, or teacher's aide, thousands of healthy meals undelivered for the elderly, and much more.

Funding for the CNCS is a smart investment. National service is a public-private partnership with 70,000 nonprofit and faith-based organizations. Nearly every dollar CNCS invests in local communities is matched by a dollar from the private sector, foundations and other sources. In fact, organizations supported by CNCS provide \$2.01 worth of educational, health, economic, job preparedness, and housing services for each federal dollar invested. This means that the CNCS investment, plus the matching money, equals an investment of nearly 2 billion additional dollars flowing into communities nationwide.

The CNCS is an independent federal agency established by Congress in 1993 to connect Americans with opportunities to serve the nation through programs like AmeriCorps. In 2009, CNCS was reauthorized with the overwhelmingly bipartisan Serve America Act, which focuses support for programs in six key service areas: disaster services, economic opportunity, education, environmental stewardship, health, and veterans and military families.

CNCS accomplishes its mission by engaging millions of Americans in results-driven service through 70,000 community and faith-based organizations each year, supporting America's civic infrastructure of food banks, homeless shelters, youth centers, senior homes, state service commissions, and volunteer centers at a time of increasing demand for services. The agency also places tens of thousands of teachers, tutors, and mentors into America's lowest performing schools, leverages \$800 million in non-CNCS resources through public-private partnerships, and strengthens America's nonprofits by recruiting more than 3 million community volunteers each year.

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Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Ed Appropriations