



March 23, 2017

Dear Senator:

On behalf of the over 170,000 members and supporters of the American Association of University Women (AAUW), I urge you to reject the president's FY18 budget proposal and support investments in non-defense discretionary (NDD) spending. I urge you to utilize your Constitutional duties and enact a budget that invests in programs that support economic growth, assists working families, and protects civil rights for all.

AAUW's member-adopted Public Policy Program supports "public budgets that balance individual rights and responsibility to the community."ⁱ President Trump's FY18 budget blueprint includes proposals to deepen the already problematic cuts to NDD programs – programs that have already suffered due to years of devastating sequestration cuts – further damaging the very communities he vowed to protect during his campaign.

The U.S. Department of Education would see a 14 percent budget reduction under the Trump administration proposed budget plan.ⁱⁱ The following cuts will have a lasting effect on students, specifically women and minorities, who need such programs to become economically sufficient:

- Cuts \$3.7 billion in grants for teacher training, after-school and summer programs, and aid programs to first generation and low-income students.ⁱⁱⁱ
- Cuts \$4 billion from the Pell grant program which helps students in need afford to pay for college without increasing student debt load.^{iv}
- Significantly reduces federal work-study aid to college students.^v
- Proposes increase of \$250 million to fund a private school voucher program and would use an additional \$1 billion to encourage school districts to adopt Title I portability.^{vi} This is a stepping stone to school vouchers and AAUW opposes all voucher schemes.^{vii} Why? Because precious tax dollars must go to public schools, not private schools that don't follow civil rights laws or critical accountability standards.

The Trump administration proposed an 18 percent reduction to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These cuts will result in:

- Decrease in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including cancer research and programs to train health professionals.^{viii}
- Decrease the number of domestic violence and sexual assault survivors served, ultimately threatening survivor safety and security.^{ix}

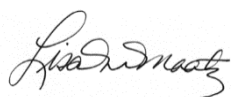
The U.S. Department of Labor (DOL) is one agency that would be hit particularly hard by the president's proposal, with reductions of more than 20 percent outlined in the administration's budget blueprint. Gutting DOL would result in the following reductions:

- Weaken federal protections that ensure workers are paid what they earn, including important equal pay laws.^x
- Elimination of the Senior Community Service Employment Program which provides assistance to low-income seniors to find work.^{xi}
- Closing of Job Corps, a job-training program for disadvantaged youth, as well as other job training programs that help individuals upgrade their skills.^{xii}

President Trump's budget proposal also eliminates funding for nearly 20 smaller independent agencies, including the National Endowment for the Arts, the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting and the Legal Services Corporation, where more than 70 percent of clients are women.^{xiii} These historic and devastating cuts to NDD programs place undue burdens on working families. While the budget process is a complicated issue, the solution is not indiscriminate and ruthless cuts to federal spending that will weaken critical programs that benefit both our citizens and our nation's bottom line. Congress should reject this "skinny" budget proposal and take action to fund core services and community investments. Everyone – and the nation's economy -- benefits from investments in public health, infrastructure, education, housing, law enforcement, and workforce programs.

While President Trump's initial budget proposal is thin on details, his fiscal agenda is clear. During this critical time, our members are relying on Congress to exercise their "power of the purse" in a reasonable manner. I urge you to invest in NDD spending and protect programs that help working families. Cosponsorship and votes associated with these issues may be included in the AAUW Action Fund *Congressional Voting Record* for the 115th Congress. Please do not hesitate to contact me at 202/785-7720, or Anne Hedgepeth, senior government relations manager at 202/785-7724, if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Lisa M. Maatz
Vice President of Government Relations and Advocacy

ⁱ American Association of University Women. Public Policy Program. (June 2015). <http://www.aauw.org/resource/principles-and-priorities/>.

ⁱⁱ Soffen, Kim and Denise Lu. *What Trump Cut in His Budget*. The Washington Post. (March 16, 2017). https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-presidential-budget-2018-proposal/?utm_term=.f492e504dc5d.

ⁱⁱⁱ Ibid.

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- ^{iv} deHahn, Patrick. *Bad News for Low-income College Students in Trump 2017 Budget*. USA Today College. (March 16, 2017). <http://college.usatoday.com/2017/03/16/bad-news-for-low-income-college-students-in-trump-2017-budget/>
- ^v Soffen, Kim and Denise Lu. *What Trump Cut in His Budget*. The Washington Post. (March 16, 2017). https://www.washingtonpost.com/graphics/politics/trump-presidential-budget-2018-proposal/?utm_term=.f492e504dc5d.
- ^{vi} National Coalition for Public Education Statement on the President's Budget. (March 16, 2017). <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/582f7c15f7e0ab3a3c7fb141/t/58ca7ca75016e14ed2aa13a6/1489665191792/ncpe%2Bstatement%2Bfinal.pdf>
- ^{vii} American Association of University Women. Quick Facts. (January 2017). <http://www.aauw.org/what-we-do/public-policy/aauw-issues/vouchers/>.
- ^{viii} Parlapiano, Alicia and Gregor Aisch. *Who Wins and Loses in Trump's Proposed Budget*. The New York Times. (March 16, 2017). https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/03/15/us/politics/trump-budget-proposal.html?_r=0
- ^{ix} Jeltsen, Melissa. *Trump's Budget Would Be Devastating to Poor Victims of Domestic Abuse*. The Huffington Post. (March 17, 2017). http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-budget-domestic-abuse-victims_us_58cc2184e4b0ec9d29dbd9f7
- ^x LaMagna, Maria. *How Trump's Budget Proposals Could Impact Millions of Women*. MarketWatch. (March 18, 2017). <http://www.marketwatch.com/story/how-trumps-budget-proposals-could-impact-women-2017-03-17>
- ^{xi} Ibid
- ^{xii} Marte, Jonnelle. *Labor Dept. Cuts Target Job Training Programs for Seniors, Disadvantaged Youths*. The Washington Post (March 16, 2017). https://www.washingtonpost.com/business/economy/labor-dept-cuts-target-job-training-programs-for-seniors-disadvantaged-youths/2017/03/15/4aba0966-0999-11e7-93dc-00f9bdd74ed1_story.html?utm_term=.b2d7e9268a9f
- ^{xiii} Jeltsen, Melissa. *Trump's Budget Would Be Devastating to Poor Victims of Domestic Abuse*. The Huffington Post. (March 17, 2017). http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/trump-budget-domestic-abuse-victims_us_58cc2184e4b0ec9d29dbd9f7