

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

March 21, 2024

Press Contacts:

[Dylan Stafford](#) (Murray)

[Eli Rosen](#) (Baldwin)

BILL SUMMARY: Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Fiscal Year 2024 Appropriations Bill

Protects investments in Americans' health, workers' rights, schools, students, and families in every part of the country—rejecting draconian cuts that would have decimated programs people count on every day

Lowers child care costs for families—building on recent historic progress with \$1 billion increase for early childhood education

Boosts funding for cutting-edge medical research, the 988 lifeline and mental health research, our nation's K-12 schools, and more

Rejects scores of extreme Republican riders that would have set our country back decades—restricting access to reproductive care, blocking relief to student borrowers, greenlighting discrimination, and much more

Washington, D.C. – The Fiscal Year 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act provides \$222.2 billion in base discretionary funding.

“After months of negotiations, we crafted a bipartisan bill that will keep costs down for families, help communities tackle the fentanyl epidemic, and give hardworking Americans the opportunities and tools they need to succeed. This bill will help us meet some of our nation’s most pressing challenges and better ensure families can live healthy, fulfilling lives with economic security,” said Senator Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies. **“We successfully rejected any efforts to include radical poison pill policies and stopped further attacks on women’s freedom to control their bodies. Working in good faith with my Republican colleagues, our legislation helps take on the fentanyl and opioid crisis, expand access to**

affordable child care, invest in critical mental health and affordable health care programs, and connect Americans with the education and workforce training they need to land good-paying jobs.”

“When it comes to people’s health, our kids’ future, and workers’ ability to make ends meet, we simply cannot afford to roll back the clock, and this bill ensures we will not—by protecting and strengthening key investments in the American people and rejecting draconian cuts and truly extreme riders that would have set us back decades,” said Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), Chair of the Senate Appropriations Committee. **“This bill invests in workers, families, students, and seniors—and sustains critical progress we have made in recent years. As the child care crisis crunches families across the country, this bill will help more families afford the child care they need with a significant new federal investment. As communities respond to the fentanyl and opioids crisis, this bill protects essential funding to support frontline efforts to prevent and address substance use disorders. As we build on America’s historic economic recovery, this bill helps protect workers’ rights and ensure they get the paychecks they have earned. This bill rejects outlandish cuts to investments in our kids’ education and delivers essential funding for our nation’s public K-12 schools and for students to pursue a higher education. It makes new investments in cutting-edge medical research, keeps up the fight against infectious diseases, and protects investments in our public health system and infrastructure.”**

Key Points & Highlights – Department of Labor

Department of Labor: The bill includes \$13.4 billion in funding for the Department of Labor.

Workforce Development: The bill includes \$2.9 billion for Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) formula grants, protecting essential investments made in recent years. It provides \$285 million for Registered Apprenticeships and sustains funding for a range of other programs, such as YouthBuild and Reentry Employment Opportunities. The bill also rejects House Republicans’ proposal to eliminate the Job Corps and the Senior Community Service Employment Program. Protecting funding for these key workforce development programs will help leverage investments made in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, Inflation Reduction Act, and CHIPS and Science Act to continue to grow the economy, provide workers the skills they need to secure good-paying jobs of the future, and help American businesses compete globally.

Worker Protection: The bill protects investments in the Department of Labor’s worker protection agencies and rejects the draconian cuts proposed in the House bill. It protects funding for the Wage and Hour Division—providing \$260 million to support the Division’s work and rejecting the nearly 30% cut in the House bill that would have decimated efforts to recover wages workers are owed and to combat exploitative child labor. The bill also protects funding for the Occupational Safety and Health

Administration (OSHA)—providing level funding of \$632 million and rejecting House Republicans' 15% cut.

Key Points & Highlights – Department of Health and Human Services

Department of Health and Human Services (HHS): The bill provides \$116.8 billion in funding for the Department of Health and Human Services, maintaining and building on significant new investments made in recent years.

Child Care and Early Learning Programs: The bill provides a \$1 billion increase for early learning programs within HHS over fiscal year 2023. It provides \$8.75 billion for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG)—a \$725 million or 9% increase over fiscal year 2023—which will help more families across the country find and afford the child care they need. It also provides \$12.27 billion for Head Start, a \$275 million increase over fiscal year 2023, which will support Head Start teachers and staff as the program faces staffing shortages. Sustained annual increases to our federal investments in child care and Head Start are critical in tackling the child care crisis and helping to ensure more families can find and afford the quality, affordable child care and early childhood education options they need. With the new investments provided in this bill, annual discretionary funding for CCDBG and Head Start over the last three fiscal years has increased by \$4.4 billion. The bill also includes a provision allowing flexibility in enrolling children into American Indian/Alaska Native (AIAN) and Migrant and Seasonal Head Start programs.

Biomedical Research: The bill provides \$48.6 billion in base discretionary funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH)—an increase of \$300 million in base funding over fiscal year 2023. The bill includes targeted increases to propel life-saving and life-changing cures and treatments, including: a \$75 million increase for mental health research; a \$100 million increase for Alzheimer's disease research; a \$120 million increase for cancer research; a \$5 million increase for opioid research; \$12.5 million for a new palliative care research program; a \$10 million increase for diabetes research; and a \$10 million increase for the IMPROVE initiative for research on maternal mortality. The bill also includes \$1.5 billion for the Advanced Research Projects Agency for Health (ARPA-H)—protecting current funding. The funding in this bill builds on an increase of \$6 billion for NIH, including funding for ARPR-H, over the last two fiscal years.

Substance Use Prevention and Treatment: The bill maintains key investments made in recent years to address the rising toll of opioid overdoses fueled by fentanyl and to improve access to substance use disorder treatment and prevention by providing more than \$4.6 billion to support substance use prevention and treatment efforts. The bill provides \$2 billion for the Substance Use Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Services Block Grant; \$1.575 billion for State Opioid Response grants; and \$145 million for the Rural Communities Opioid Response Program.

Mental Health: The bill protects and builds upon key investments in mental health programs including \$1 billion for the Mental Health Block Grant and \$153 million for the Behavioral Health Workforce Education and Training Program to support community-based clinical training and strengthen the mental health workforce through repayment of education loans for individuals working in either a Mental Health Professional Shortage Area or where the overdose death rate exceeds the national average. The bill provides an \$18 million increase for the 988 Suicide Prevention Lifeline, building on the nearly \$400 million increase in fiscal year 2023; \$385 million for Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinics, maintaining the \$70 million increase secured in fiscal year 2023; and \$98.8 million for the National Child Traumatic Stress Initiative, a \$5 million increase over fiscal year 2023. The bill also includes more than \$160 million in investments within the Department of Education to address the shortage of school-based mental health professionals in our nation's K-12 schools.

Essential Health Care Programs: The bill protects essential funding to address public health threats, improve health care access and affordability, and strengthen the health care workforce. This includes: \$1.86 billion for Community Health Centers, including \$55 million for school-based health centers; \$1.4 billion for Health Professions Workforce Development; \$1.2 billion for the core Maternal and Child Health programs; \$345 million for the Improving Maternal Health Initiative to combat the unacceptable levels of maternal mortality—a \$21 million increase over fiscal year 2023; and \$4.1 billion for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid's (CMS) administrative needs.

The bill increases funding for the Organ Procurement and Transplantation Network (OPTN) Modernization Initiative by \$23 million to strengthen and reform the nation's organ donation and transplant system. There are more than 100,000 individuals on the organ transplant waitlist, and this initiative will allow OPTN to better serve patients and families and strengthen accountability.

The bill also includes \$350 million to support public health infrastructure and capacity, maintaining the 75% increase secured in fiscal year 2023 to strengthen public health infrastructure and the public health workforce at the state and local level to improve preparedness and respond to emerging public health threats.

The bill includes \$613 million for the Ending the HIV Epidemic Initiative, rejecting House Republicans' attempt to eliminate the program. This program provides high-need jurisdictions with prevention and treatment services for people at high risk for HIV transmission. This includes \$220 million within the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Domestic HIV/AIDS Prevention and Research programs to develop and deploy innovative data management solutions, increase access to PrEP, and better detect and respond to HIV clusters. The bill also protects funding for reproductive health programs, including Title X and the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Program, which House Republicans sought to eliminate.

Pandemic Preparedness and Biodefense: The bill includes \$3.6 billion for the Administration for Strategic Preparedness and Response (ASPR). This includes a \$65 million increase for the Biomedical Advanced Research and Development Authority (BARDA) and \$10 million to establish ongoing funding for industrial base manufacturing and supply chain activities to help ensure that critical resources in the public health supply chain—including raw materials, medical countermeasures, and ancillary supplies—are manufactured in the United States.

Home Heating and Cooling Assistance: The bill includes \$4.025 billion for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP), a \$25 million increase over fiscal year 2023, to help low-income households heat and cool their homes.

Key Points & Highlights – Department of Education

Department of Education: The bill provides \$79.1 billion in funding for the Department of Education.

Elementary and Secondary Education: The bill protects and builds on investments in foundational formula grant programs for elementary and secondary education and in public schools, teachers, and students. Title I-A grants and the primary IDEA Special Education State grant program each receive increases of \$20 million. This builds on the more than \$3.1 billion in increases for these programs over the last two fiscal years. The bill rejects the House bill’s proposed rescission of \$8.7 billion in Title I-A grants for the current school year that would have significantly reduced funding for the nearly 90 percent of school districts nationwide that receive these funds.

The bill also rejects the House bill’s proposed elimination of roughly a dozen programs intended to improve teaching and learning in elementary and secondary schools, maintaining significant investments included in the last two fiscal years. This includes rejecting House Republicans’ proposal to eliminate the \$890 million English Language Acquisition program, which helps close the achievement gap for our country’s 5 million English learners.

The bill maintains the \$20 million investment in the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program, which is used to strengthen the relationship between parents and their children’s schools and engage families in education—rejecting House Republicans’ proposed elimination of the program.

Higher Education: The bill provides a maximum Pell Grant award of \$7,395 for the 2024-2025 school year, preserving the \$900 increase in the maximum award over the last two fiscal years. This coming school year, Pell Grants are expected to help over 7 million students at all stages of life pursue postsecondary education and further their careers. The bill protects funding for Federal Work Study and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant that provide additional need-based aid to students to help afford postsecondary education—rejecting House Republicans’ proposals to eliminate both programs.

The bill also includes \$70 million for the Teacher Quality Partnership program and \$15 million for the Hawkins Centers of Excellence to help educator preparation programs address educator shortages—rejecting harmful proposed cuts in the House bill. Similarly, the bill continues to provide \$90 million for the Supporting Effective Educator Development program—rejecting the House bill’s proposal to eliminate the program—and sustaining these evidence-based efforts to prepare, develop, and retain an effective and diverse teacher and school leader workforce.

The bill also maintains investments in a range of other programs including TRIO, GEAR UP, and Postsecondary Student Success Grants to help students prepare for and succeed in post-secondary education. The bill protects funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School Program (CCAMPIS)—providing \$75 million and rejecting House Republicans’ proposal to eliminate the program.

The bill also includes important investments in the administration of student aid programs that will support the implementation of more affordable repayment plans and fixes to longstanding issues in student loan forgiveness programs, as well as support borrowers in repayment.

Key Points & Highlights – Related Agencies

Social Security Administration (SSA): The bill includes \$14.2 billion for SSA’s administrative expenses—an increase of \$100 million over fiscal year 2023 and a rejection of cuts proposed in the House bill. These resources will help SSA keep up with rising costs to address service delivery challenges. But tight spending caps significantly limit the ability to provide SSA the funding it needs to provide the service that Americans who have paid into Social Security deserve. Addressing backlogs in key workloads and wait times will require sustained increases to allow SSA to increase staffing and make needed IT improvements.

AmeriCorps: The bill protects programmatic funding for AmeriCorps—rejecting a 50% cut and the elimination of education awards proposed in House Republicans’ bill.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting: The bill protects funding for the Corporation for Public Broadcasting to support more than 1,500 locally owned TV and radio stations nationwide—rejecting House Republicans’ proposal to zero out funding and weaken Americans’ access to local reporting. The bill maintains a critical investment of \$60 million for digital interconnection and \$535 million as a two-year advance appropriation, of which roughly 70% is provided directly to local public TV and radio stations.

Institute of Museum and Library Services: The bill maintains current funding of \$295 million for the Institute of Museum and Library Services.

National Labor Relations Board (NLRB): The bill protects current funding of \$299 million for the National Labor Relations Board—rejecting House Republicans’ proposal to gut funding for the Board by \$99 million, or 33%.