



May 5, 2015

**OPPOSE FY 2016 BUDGET RESOLUTION:
IT HARMS VULNERABLE COMMUNITIES**

Dear Senator:

On behalf of The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, a coalition charged by its diverse membership of more than 200 national organizations to promote and protect the rights of all persons in the United States, we write to express our strong opposition to the Fiscal Year 2016 conference budget resolution. The budget would slash funding for the most vulnerable Americans and underfund transportation infrastructure and education, areas that are critical for our long-term economic growth. We urge you and your colleagues to reject it.

The Leadership Conference believes that the budget resolution would force our nation backwards. According to the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the conference budget resolution is nothing less than “Robin Hood in reverse,” with the majority of budget cuts coming from programs for low- and middle-income Americans, despite the fact that these programs make up less than one-fourth of federal spending.¹ A vote in favor of the budget resolution is a vote against the communities represented by our member organizations, including vulnerable groups like young children, seniors, low-income families, individuals with disabilities, students, the unemployed, and the uninsured.

The conference budget resolution is a blueprint for increasing poverty and inequality. The budget would more than double sequestration cuts in non-defense discretionary programs over the next 10 years. It proposes \$5 trillion in cuts to Medicaid, SNAP/food stamps, child care, Head Start, transportation, housing, and other programs that help the most vulnerable Americans, while continuing or even increasing tax cuts for corporations and repealing the estate tax, which benefits only the wealthiest Americans. In addition, the resolution includes a dramatic increase in military funding by redirecting funds through the Overseas Contingency Operations (OCO) fund—what some have referred to as a “slush fund” for military spending.

Under budget reconciliation procedures, the resolution repeals the Affordable Care Act (ACA), yet assumes that the \$1 trillion in revenue-raising measures in the Act would remain. If the elimination of the ACA prevails, this revenue would disappear, and it would make an even greater shortfall in the budget. This could mean that the Republican leadership will look for additional non-defense discretionary cuts to make up the shortfall.

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¹ Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, *Statement by Robert Greenstein on the New Congressional Budget Agreement*, April 29, 2015. <http://www.cbpp.org/sites/default/files/atoms/files/4-29-15bud.pdf>

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We are deeply troubled by the FY 2016 conference budget resolution. Our nation deserves a budget that meets the needs of all Americans, and we remain hopeful that as in years past a compromise can be reached in the months ahead.

For these reasons, we strongly urge you to oppose the FY 2016 conference budget resolution. Thank you for your consideration. If you have any questions, please contact Emily Chatterjee, Senior Counsel at (202) 466-3648.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Wade Henderson', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Wade Henderson
President & CEO

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nancy Zirkin', followed by a long horizontal flourish.

Nancy Zirkin
Executive Vice President