

Hearing Transcript

House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Hearing on Member Priorities

March 1, 2017

(JOINED IN PROGRESS)

DELAURO:

... the people's bill because it does provide opportunity for people to help meet their needs. With their life- saving biomedical research, we equip our nation to deal with public health emergencies, we level the playing field for low-income children looking to learn, we help Americans get the skills that they need to find a job in a tough economy.

So, these efforts all impact the lives of our constituents and Americans all over this nation and therefore these kinds of cuts would impact each and every American, especially children, families and senior. So, looking forward to listening to all of our colleagues here today and what their priorities are on to ensure that we keep our promise to the American people. Thanks very much.

COLE:

Thank you for your remarks and with that, Mr. Thompson, it's good to have you my friend, you're recognized for five minutes for whatever remarks that you would care to make.

THOMPSON:

Thank you Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro. It's a privilege and honor to be able to be before you this morning. Thanks for this opportunity. I want to thank you for your dedication to the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human services, Education and Related agencies. In the current fiscal environment I recognize the challenges placed before the subcommittee and I appreciate your ongoing leadership and efforts to provide quality education and health related services to millions of Americans, makes a difference in the folks that I serve.

As co-chair of the house, career and technical education Caucus and a senior member of the House committee on education workforce, I would like to use my time today to highlight the importance of dedicating strong resources. The programs authorized by the Carl D Perkins Vocational and Technical Education Act or the Perkins Act in fiscal year 2018. Career in technical education provides students of all ages with the academic and technical skills necessary to become career and college ready.

According to the most recent data from the office of vocational education, approximately 12 million students participate in CT programs for 2013 - 2014 school year. While quality CT programs are available to a number of students, we have to work to make them even more assessable. And doing so will ensure that future and current members of our nation's workforce

have the opportunity to excel high wage, high skilled and high demand career fields, the very field to keep our nation competitive in the global economy.

Employers across United States, especially those in skilled trades are faced with difficulty as a search for qualified workers. According to a recent poll conducted by the Society for human resource management more than half of all employers reported that they are unable to recruit workers for open positions. And human resource professionals predict the lack of workforce readiness will impact employers for years to come.

Today, more than 1 million positions remain open in trade, transportation and utility sector and 315,000 manufacturing jobs go unoccupied. By training a competitive workforce to fulfil the 21st Century demands CT programs help employers fill those jobs and close the skills gap. Last Congress, the House reached a bipartisan consensus on the importance of CT when we voted to pass HR 5587, the strength in career and technical education in the 21st Century Act by vote of 405 to 5.

As the individual who introduced a sponsor this legislation, this bill would reauthorize the Perkins Act and I was encouraged by his passage and certainly look forward to advocating for similar legislation in the 115th Congress. In addition to taking steps to improve CT related policy, we must also support CT through appropriations process. Despite its importance, the Perkins Act funding has declined by 13 percent or \$170 million over 10 years.

Today, more than 20 states receiving a Perkin's state and grant allocation is at or below the level that we obtained in 1998. Chairman and Ranking Member, this concerning trend does not reflect the needs of students, workers. The employers are the backbone of the American economy must do better by them with some (inaudible) I urge the subcommittee to robustly fund Perkins Act programs for fiscal year 2018 and I want to thank you for your commitment to this issue and all the issues under your jurisdiction. It really is a privilege and honor to be before you this morning.

COLE:

It is good to have you and you actually have a little time because though we started early, I started on time and the first person couldn't be here so the next witness is enough to yield my friend if she has any questions or comments, she can.

DELAURO:

I would just say that you couldn't agree with you more just in terms of statistics, 2015 we have states reporting that 7.3 million high school students participated or took at least a course in CT. National Center for Education Sciences, 85 percent of the nation's 3.9 million high school kids have complete one or more occupational CT. E-course 19 percent concentrated to at least three credits in that field, that's saying nothing that post-secondary.

Offer 2017, the house on number is exactly what the type funded its 1.1 as is the Senate so we'll like to see what happens in the movement on his field and that direction. For now we do not know

what 2018 looks like but I would just say continue advocating anyway, it is a wonderful program and provides real opportunity for youngsters.

THOMPSON:

And it's a great program with return on investment. I know we largely think of this our kid's secondary education but the fact is, a Perkin serves people of all ages. Its people who just want greater opportunity for them and their families, they want be able to make more money and therefore contribute more in taxes and the tax base.

And so this is for any American at any point in her life, Perkins allows them a pathway to the greater opportunity with return on investment for employers and for the nation. I do appreciate the time.

COLE:

It's all right you still got a minute or two. But let me chime in here too because it is actually very important program in my state, we're probably Oklahoma and Ohio I have the two most robust career tax systems in the country, so it's a staple for us. Big part of our education system so it's money well spent. I think the fact that it has any increases is larger reflection and my friend knows the strength we have on the budget and are opening comments about this - and look we will obviously live within the allocation we're given by budget committee.

That's where the final decision rests, the top line in the allocation our Chairman gives this and I'm very supportive of whatever that is but if we would have cut through the size of them reported in that, yes there would be consequences to that. No part of this budget they can escape unscathed if we have \$18-\$20 billion. It will just change everything and tell that to various members and probably we'll say a couple of more times as people come in and out.

And again we can always read about different things, but actually there is a remarkable consensus on the subcommittee about these kinds of programs have been very bipartisan, you were all for putting young people at work, you were all for giving people, whatever age and skills they need to be successful in the workplace where many problems as well as Carl Perkin's Act.

(UNKNOWN)

Yes I think and I mean this serves the young lady who got up this morning, who didn't want to get out of bed to go to school because she did doesn't learn in a conventional way, she learns by maybe with wrenches or welder or stethoscope, but it also serves the folks who have been stuck in poverty, may be intergenerational poverty for decades to be able to work their way off away from the government dependency and so certainly under the - and I don't pretend to understand how we score things around this town.

But was this is one where just a little bit of an investment and to be able to have somebody wake up and to no longer be depend upon the TANF program or SNAP program or you go down the line and well can be tens of thousand dollars of support and to be able to just have that American

dream of opportunity to wake up one day and to no longer be government dependent. This is - if you look at it from a dynamic scoring financially this strengthens our position as a nation.

DELAURO:

Let me suggest that you take a look at something a study that the Mannkal Foundation recently did along with PU (ph), it's jobs in the digital economy, but it is about the people - and you made a very good point that the folks at any age can access the program, but that there is 70 percent of folks today in this country without a college degree. That doesn't mean that they don't have skills and they don't need to be able to have courses which would allow them to succeed.

It's a very, very interesting study and that I think we would act on because combined what we're doing here with Perkins, with what you do with community colleges, with apprenticeship programs, with others in which to get people gainfully employed. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

You're most welcome. You got another issue you would like to bring up GT?

THOMPSON:

Not at this time. I better go show off for Chairman Fox's educational workforce hearing.

COLE:

Thanks for coming by and we appreciate testimony very much again and it's something the committee looks on with a great deal of interest and genuine bipartisan support. Thanks for highlighting it.

THOMPSON:

I appreciate. Thank you.

COLE:

With that, Mr. Polis if we could have you next, we're actually moving along pretty fast here.

POLIS:

Thank you.

COLE:

Hey Jared, thank you. Appreciate you being here. With that, gentleman's recognized for five minutes to deliver whatever remarks you care to the committee.

POLIS:

Thank you both. And particularly since this bill as in, come to the floors, as much as some other, it's great this opportunity provide some feedback. What can be more important than public education? I think we all value that that, our constituents value it, I'm honored to serve as the Ranking Democrat on the subcommittee on early childhood, elementary and secondary education so I'm very involved with education here.

In prior service I was Chairman of our State Board of Education. I've been very active in this area providing opportunity and hope for kids. I had some possible to highlight every education program with support in five minutes so I will focus on a few that I think are important from a funding perspective.

The first one I want to mention is the Federal Charter School Program. In 2015 - '16 school year, Public Charter Schools educated more than 2.9 million students in 6800 schools. 43 states in the District of Columbia have enacted Charter School laws, over half the students by Public Charter Schools are freely introduced students, over half are minorities, 78 percent limited English proficient.

Our Public Charter Schools continue to grow and deliver outstanding educational outcomes for students nationwide. In particular the Federal Sport piece, the Federal Sport piece is so important because it focuses on quality. Separate studies by the center reinventing public education and Mathematic policy research have found that the Charter School students are more likely to graduate from high school going to college stay in college and of higher earnings in early adulthood.

Charter school program funds are critical to continue the success. Nearly every Public Charter School that is successful, got off the ground because of this Federal Charter School program. I strongly encourage a committee to continue the investment in the next fiscal year by investing a minimum of \$350 million, which would fund the Federal Charter School expansion programs.

And again this ties it into the quality, because of course, like any public school, not all Charter Schools are good. It's certainly not a silver bullet but with lot of quality indicators, authorized practices it is very important.

The next slide I want to hit upon is the Education Innovation Research or EIR grant program, which is a successor to the investing education which we used to call the I3 grant program. A very, very important program which was modelled after the successful small business innovation research or SBIR program which has been around for several decades and it's been funded over \$2 billion across 11 federal agencies.

EIR would apply the successful SBIR approach in the field of social spending and we really shift evidence-based outcomes for experimental innovative policies on June 7, 2016 in House Republicans task force on poverty opportunity and upper mobility introduced a better way blueprint released by speaker Ryan, which included support for EIR type programs, which is a tiered evidence program.

Early research is shown evidence that I3 program, the successor to EIR is working. A report by Patrick Lester at the Social Innovation Research center released in January found that many programs demonstrated a positive impact in reading and literacy. Evidence-based programs truly should have the highest attention investment with our limited federal resources. And I would be remiss if I did not reiterate my strong support for the core programs within our public education system.

There are federal that is Title 1 in ESC, ASCA. Title 1 funding is absolutely critical in addressing some of the disparities in funding and poverty in our country. The SCA, I will remind the committee that the federal government has never lived up to its commitment to fully fund special education. We're appreciative if any progress can be made in that regard.

In addition to education, I want to mention my solid support for other programs under the jurisdiction of the subcommittee. Notably programs provide adequate healthcare for individuals living with HIV and AIDS. Most notably the Ryan White HIV AIDS program and the AIDS Drug Assistance programs both house HHS.

These programs help ensure that people with HIV and AIDS receive the services they need. So, it's an important contribution to the overall health piece, which is very important for this committee so it doesn't make solving problems elsewhere even more complicated and costly.

Finally on the labor side, I want to highlight the importance of employee owned companies and providing major economic benefits to communities and addressing some of the common equity disparities in our country. Lot of data run employee owned companies, higher rates of employee retention and better able to weather turbulent markets.

Many great employee owned companies, including some of my district like New Belgium Brewery, many in other areas of the countries as well like Cliff, DanceCo, King Arthur flour, these are very important companies where the workers can share in the value that's created for the shareholders and the Department of Labor shares regulatory oversight of ESOPs with the IRS but I can do more to help businesses try to convert to employee ownership structures.

Labor could and should be doing more to support employer businesses and I am asking this committee to include report language to require the department of labor to work with the IRS and the SBA to develop guidance and tools available to those interested in employee ownership structures. And again since we won't have the opportunity to do that on the floor, maybe we will but if we do, I will, I would encourage you include that in the committee.

Mark, I don't think it's terribly controversial, but it would be a very good thing for department of labor to take on. Look forward to working with each of you on these programs. Happy to answer any questions.

COLE:

We will not have much time for questions, I'm removing all by - do you want a make a couple of comments and then reassure you on a couple things. Again, very much agree with many parts of

your testimony. On Charter schools actually we made last year, a very substantial increase and again very bipartisan. I want to particularly congratulate my friend Senator Blunt who is the big pusher on the other side of (inaudible).

And obviously you know, while we may have different views about the subject of education, we do have somebody who care a lot about Charter Schools there. So I would expect it to be interesting to see what the administration wants to do, but there is bipartisan commitment. Also, you know, this committee, frankly for two years in rows proposed more for IDEA and the administration has requested and that we propose \$500 million in the '16 budget and administration proposed \$170 million, that's increase in \$11 billion to \$12 billion program.

We settled for 10 so I thought that was pretty reasonable compromise and they were flat last year but we again included increased. We didn't get our 17 bill to the floor. However, you know, in one form or another, I think you'll be - we would like to do more, but you'll see that the house on a bipartisan basis actually lead in doing IDA, actually one of the most efficient programs we have every school district in America needs it.

So, I really thank you for highlighting those and frankly the rest of your remarks as well. My friend does a comment -

DELAURO:

Just quickly I would associate myself with the Chairman's remarks. But I would also talk about Title I where this committee on the bipartisan basis has increased to funding for Title I understanding its need and that was quite frankly, in opposition to what was proposed by the prior administration. I am excited about your EIR program, knowing something about how SBIR has and is so critically important.

And I know in my own district the research, the innovation everything that has come out of that has been very, very successful. So we would try to reiterate that here as well and with regard to Ryan White, our budget in the house is as same as it was in 2016. Well, it's less and the Senate with both to the house can prevail if we ever get the document. Thanks. Thank you very much.

COLE:

Gentleman from California care to make any remark quickly or - Again thank you very much. I appreciate you being here. I represent (inaudible) and Jim, you're next up. So now we have this distinguished gentleman from Rhode Island. Good to have you here my friend and you're recognized for five minutes for whatever remarks you can make to the committee.

LANGEVIN:

Thank you Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Delauro and members of the committee, I appreciate your time today and thank you for holding this hearing and inviting members of Congress testify. So, I appreciate the opportunity to highlight three initiatives that would not only

positively impact my state of Rhode Island, but also to help improve the lives of people across the nation.

Number one, is the funding of the Lifespan Respite Care Act. Two, is investing in the Carl D. Perkins career and technical education act and the three, is supporting the Adoption Opportunities Program.

First, I respectfully request \$5 million for the Lifespan Respite Care Act programs. When I campaigned the enactment of this law back in 2006, it was a bipartisan effort with then Congressman Mike Fergusson from New Jersey. He and I partnered up, it's important to bill that became law, and for me it was so with first-hand knowledge of the tremendous difference that a dedicated caregiver to make in the life person with a disability or chronic condition.

Lifespan Respite Care Act is the only federal program - federal initiative that excludes we concentrates on respite and does not restrict program eligibility based on the age or veteran status. So, basically respite is when someone has a - family caregiver and is caring for a sick child, someone with disability, apparently parent. The caregiver themselves often need some backup and support that gives them - if you have someone coming in for about an hour day or a couple of hours a week just so that the a person could go with do the other things that they need to do with the family, whether it's going to the doctors themselves or going grocery shopping or taking the kids to ballgame or whatever.

These are important things that make a family work but the family caregiver can get burned out very easily. So this helps to coordinate a patchwork system that different states have so we are most effectively using resources to have the most effective system for respite. So more than 35 states in the District of Columbia received grants under this program, bolstering a coordinated communities systems that are often the only resource for struggling families caring for loved ones.

Caregivers need and deserve relief from physical and emotional responsibility of caring for person with a chronic illness or disability. Lifespan Respite Programs often help caregivers manage stress, thereby mitigating the development of physical and mental health issues associated with the strain of their roles. Lifespan Respite Care Act programs also help to delay or in some instances, avoid nursing home entry which strengthens families and improves the well-being of all parties.

Reducing the strain on institutionalized care facilities also aggravates pressure on our healthcare system. For example, caregivers provided in estimated \$470 billion in uncompensated care, uncompensated care if I to put a dollar figure on it, that family caregivers provided 2013. More than to the total federal and state Medicaid spending for that year, respite is about more than providing caregivers a chance to recharge.

Lifespan Respite Care Act program reinforces a healthcare infrastructure that allows people with a disability or illness to remain at home and supports families or willing to provide quality care. I also respectfully request strong support for Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, a career in technical education ensures students are career and college ready. And Perkins provides the largest federal investment in CTE across the country. In 2013-2014 school years, more than 12 million student participated CTE programs.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, many of the fastest growing jobs through 2022 will be CTE fields, including stem, skills, trades and IT. However, half of employers report that they are unable to recruit workers for open positions. Perkins grants ensure students learn the skills needed for these jobs.

They developed strong educational pathways for students in career and strengthening career counselling, provide professional development for educators and purchase vital equipment for classrooms. This bipartisan program serves - deserves strong support for 2018.

Lastly, I respectfully request \$50 million for programs under the Adoption Opportunities Act. Every day almost 427,000 children are living in foster care across the country. Unfortunately, children who enter the child welfare system after age 14 are much more likely to age out of foster care than be adopted. Already at a disadvantage, these children end up without a network of support, especially in times of crisis.

More than half of children who are out of foster care experience episodes of homelessness and 25 percent do not receive a high school diploma or GED, only 6 percent complete a two or four year college degree. Adoption Opportunities grants support permanent solutions for foster children. They encourage the adoption of older children, minorities and children with special needs and provide post adoption support. So I urge you to support the adoption opportunities because, quite simply, every child deserves a family.

Thank you for your listening to my testimony and taking my request into consideration for the 20 - the FY 2018 labor, health and human services, education bill. Each program I highlighted provides American families with crucial tools to achieve success in today's society. So from finding a loving homes for foster children, providing crucial career and education services, to ensuring caregivers who serve those in need receive care themselves. These programs matter to strengthen our communities and to uphold our nation's promise of compassion, equality and opportunity.

COLE:

I want to thank my friend for his testimony. My fellow former Secretary of State, we reserved together at the same time. It was always thoughtful as usually. You would be happy to know that your good friend Mr. Thompson from Pennsylvania was in here also pushing for Carl Perkins money earlier so bipartisan on that.

I just saw the members because we had several arrived, we are not going to normally do questions but at the end of each person, if there is a comment or question that you want to make, I'm just going to throw that open to the committee but we'll try to move on schedule but again anybody is free to make a comment or ask a question.

(UNKNOWN)

I was reminiscing that acknowledging GT in his great work, Judy Thompson from Pennsylvania, we've been great bipartisan partners in the Career and Technical Education programs Act. I thank him for his leadership.

COLE:

Thank you gentleman for his testimony. I see my friend - Oh I'm sorry.

(Crosstalk)

COLE:

My friend Gentleman Lynn from Kansas is here and she is next up on our agenda. She is working her way I am going to take personal privilege as a Chairman to chastise her for announcing that she is not going to be running again next time. This one of our most thoughtful and the best leaders on our side of the aisle and I think in Congress and there's nobody I want to miss more around this place and my good friend from the neighboring states.

JENKINS:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and thank you Chairman Cole, Member Delauro and honorable members of this committee. In December of 2016 Congress passed the 21st Century Cures Act which contained the Mental Health First-aid Act which was one of the top priorities of mine since coming to Congress back in 2009.

And today I simply ask of that funding level of nearly 15 million be fully appropriated in the fiscal year 2018 budget. At section 9010, Ray authorizes grants to states and municipalities, Indian tribes and non-profit groups to train teachers and school personnel, emergency service personnel and others to recognize the signs and symptoms of mental illness to become familiar with resources in the community for people with mental illness and to safely de-escalate crisis situations involving someone with a mental illness.

This grant program that has been included in appropriation bills in years past and has enjoyed broad bipartisan support from Congress and the public. I can't overstate how important these grants to law enforcement and first responders. The first step to helping someone suffering with a mental illness, to get the help he or she needs, to be able to quickly spot the signs of that mental illness and know where to point that friend, colleague, neighbor or family member.

These funds will help police officers, first responders, veterans, advocates, educators, and others spot the signs that get people the help that they need. We hear about the state of our mental health system every day and the state of the VA dealing with injured veterans. We hear about police and first responders called to a scene where someone has become dangerous and they are not sure of the best way to respond.

Section 9810 will help those people know instinctively how to respond so that the situations stay in control and the risk of harm is decreased. The kinds of education programs that this legislation

will fund has been shown to be effective and efficient in teaching people the signs of mental illness and how to drop this stigma of that illness so that the people they live and work with can receive the appropriate help necessary.

I am thankful for the opportunity to address you here today and ask the State at funding level be given the SIMS (ph), so that it may in turn help those that need the training at the most. Appreciate your time and the opportunity to address the committee. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

It's great work on Cures and on the mental health confirming that with our mutual friend, Mr. Murphy did such great work on and you reported such wonderful bipartisan fashion, I think unanimously how you committed that stuff. I think he would be here later to talk been that. Any questions or comments from anybody else on the committee?

Well, I see my very good friend, Ms. Kelly has arrived, I'm sorry I didn't see you over there when you first got in and good to have you here on the committee. I want to thank you for coming before (inaudible), we'll just call it the Labor H Committee because it's a mouthful if we try to get it all out but we're delighted to have you here and the gentle-lady is recognized for five minutes for whatever testimony she cares to give.

KELLY:

Thank you, Mr. Chair and Ranking Member and all the committee members. I would like to thank you for the opportunity today to speak before you and testify on behalf of the families of Illinois, second congressional district, and on behalf of millions of Americans whose livelihoods adversely impacted due to health inequities that exist in our nation. To those who don't know me, my name is Robin Kelly and I'm the Chair of the Congressional Black Caucus Health Braintrust.

I've never been up the belief that the ZIP code you are born in should never determine how long you live in this country, or how healthy you are. Grandmothers have to decide between paying their electric bill paying or paying for their diabetes medicine. Parents should not have to decide between putting food in the refrigerator or paying for an \$80 dental procedure. But those are decisions that are being made every day for far too many Americans and too often they have devastating or fatal consequences.

Last Congress, I authored a report, "The Kelly Report on Health Disparities in America", an official congressional analysis of the state of African-American health in the United States that offers a blueprint for reversing negative health trends in the communities of color. The Kelly Report outlines the grim state of black health in America and remedies to reverse the negative health statistics plaguing communities of color.

Consider this, African-Americans have higher rates of mortality than any other racial or ethnic group for 8 of the top 10 causes of death. African-American cancer rates are 10 percent higher than white Americans. Blacks are nearly twice as likely to have diabetes than whites. African-Americans are six times more likely than whites to be victims of homicide and black youth

especially do not have consistent access to the culturally sensitive trauma informed mental health care that would alleviate their burden.

While Blacks account for just 13 percent of the total US population, they account for nearly half of all new HIV infections. Those are startling facts. In a broader public health context, there is still much to be done to address the back and an estimated 1.5 million Americans suffer from Lupus. There is no reason we shouldn't be able to find the root cause of lupus and a QR. We also must invest in and address the fact that mental illness is the leading cause of disability in developed countries like the United States.

And we must address the old often overlooked problem of oral health in America, people of color suffer from disproportionate rate of tooth loss, untreated dental care, and untreated tooth decay. This committee has a tall task and ensure that our appropriations priorities reflect the health needs in the most vulnerable in this nation. It's a worthy goal, but it should be our mission. I asset the committee support my request to invest in our most vulnerable fund health delivery service sites and medically underserved areas, whether they are urban, suburban or rural in my district is offering.

And place support programs that encourage primary care providers to practice in communities with shortages. The request you receive from me will ask that you prioritize health professional training programs like the minority centers of excellence in health careers opportunities program. Additionally, my office has put together a list of what we see is the most beneficial and impactful health programs for you to appropriate funds for this Labor HHS cycle. I thank the committee for the opportunity to testify today.

COLE:

We'll begin by thanking the gentle lady for testifying that only on behalf of her district but on behalf of the Congressional black caucus as well. As I know, the gentle lady recognizes we actually have a champion on this committee from California who has done primarily -

KELLY:

My mentor.

COLE:

And anybody in this Congress to focus on racial disparities in treatments and outcome, good friend Ms. Lee, a leader I've known for a long time so we are delighted to have you there. Anybody care to make a comment or ask a question.

DELAURO:

Just I would love to have the list of what your office put together on the priorities.

KELLY:

OK. We'll get that to you.

DELAURO:

Thank you very much.

COLE:

We thank the gentle lady and I see my good friends from Pennsylvania Mr. Fitzpatrick, you're next up. Good to have you here.

FITZPATRICK:

Thank you Mr. Chairman, Ranking Member Delauro and the members of the subcommittee, thanks for your time today and I wanted to take the opportunity to address the subcommittee and I know there is an awful lot of challenges that we face the Congress, what are the most significant ones affecting our district I know are affecting so many of our districts is the group of opioid abuse and heroin addiction, overdose deaths.

And I just want to thank the committee first and foremost, for your time and strongly encourage full funding for the Opioid epidemic and related cancer research programs. The provision in the Care Act, the comprehensive addiction recovery acts as well as NIH innovation projects and state responses to opioid abuse in the 21st Century Cures Act, I need a full funding as well as at the NIH.

Mr. Chairman and Ranking Members, prescript opioid misuse continues to devastate America's nationwide. According to the centers for disease control and prevention, drug overdoses involving prescription opioid and heroin overdoses have quadrupled since 1999 and it continues to claim lives in all of our districts. I know from north to south in our district, just last year alone we saw 50 percent increase in heroin related overdose deaths which is unbelievable.

And at the same time, while we've seen this a significant increase our law-enforcement officials and first responders have tirelessly worked to save lives. Sam Residi (ph) who is the head of the Bucks County drug and alcohol commission in our district, recently reported that police departments throughout district saved 263 residents in our district through the use of Narcan, which is an opioid overdose emergency treatment and her statement was, "while the number of lives saved from accidental overdose is an amazing number, it speaks to the magnitude of this issue and the need for treatment to follow through"

And many of our police chiefs have likened it to putting a Band- Aid on a bleeding artery, Narcan is a great treatment to save lives, but prevention is really the key and that's why I am here to talk to today. Thoughtfully designed the Care statue utilized the balance strategy encompassing six pillars; prevention, treatment, recovery support, criminal justice reform, overdose reversal and law- enforcement.

Within the jurisdiction of the subcommittee, authorized funding by Care for HHS included grants that will significantly aid states with much-needed resources and tools. Just to name a few things that grant funding will accomplish. First, it would reduce the number of opioid-related deaths by assisting states and expanding access to opioid overdose reversal trucks such as Narcan and also educating healthcare professionals by developing and providing training manuals in developing new strategies for pharmacist to dispense opioid overdose reversal medication.

It will also help accomplish reducing relapses and help fully recovered patients by expanding availability of evidence-based medication. Assisted treatment and other clinical appropriate service to areas with high rates were rapid increases of heroin where opioid abuse. It will also through building connections between recovery community organizations that will strengthen outreach, reduce substance abuse disorder stigma, and reduce substance abuse cases in pregnant or postpartum women by devoting a pilot program that will better support family based services, identify gaps along the continuum of care and encouraging new approaches for service delivery.

In addition, 21st Century Cures Act also contained funding to combat the Opioid epidemic. Specifically, the remaining 500 million would supplement opioid abuse prevention and treatment activities by providing funding for states to improve prescription drug and monitoring programs implement prevention activities, trained healthcare providers and expand access to treatment programs.

And I just want to thank the committee for the time today and just bring to your attention it's really important issues affecting all of our districts, certainly it's affecting Montagnais in a staggering way.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, thank you Ranking Member Delauro.

COLE:

Thank you, I want to thank you for your thoughtful testimony, particularly the areas that you focused on, probably the former FBI saw the opioid crisis up close and personal way the lot of us have not. We did the appropriate the Cures course [Technical Difficulty]. And if we ever get our bill out, it's something I will continue to herring and I know my good friend shares my frustration.

This year we had a very substantial increase in NIH funding. Last year we will have a very substantial increase again, if we can just get the bill out in some form in across the floor. So we appreciate your highlighting and because on a bipartisan basis, this committee shares those priorities.

DELAURO:

Mr. Chairman just to tell you that - just increased what the Chairman has said. In our 2017 budget request is a rural opioid overdose reversal is \$10 million. There are several SAMSA programs that Medicaid assistance or treatment program \$50 million, you got opioid treatment programs. SAMSA, that did the (inaudible) program grants to present the prescription drug opioid overdose.

That effort on the SAMSA strategic prevention for prescription drugs and CDC, it is what you spoke about in terms of helping states to set up the monitoring programs for.

I just want to add one more point to you, take a very hard look at what is maybe coming down the pike with regard to Medicaid and Medicaid expansion and overall and Medicaid funds because Medicaid is one of the prime ways in which people are getting the opportunity to have their treatment and it being insured and cover. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

Anybody else care to ask a question or to make a comment. My good friend is excused. Thank you very much for your testimony. I see my good friend and fellow appropriations committee member Mr. Price from North Carolina is here. Mr. Price is always a pleasure to have you on either side of the dais under any circumstances. So, I look forward to whatever testimony you care to give us and my good friend's recognized for five minutes.

PRICE:

That's a rather expensive, welcome. So, thank you I appreciate the chance to be here, Ranking Member Delauro and colleagues on both sides. Thank you so much for this chance to testify on behalf of the National Service program. I am a Co-Chair along with Doris Matsui of the National Service Caucus, that's a bipartisan group of nearly 80 members and I bring Doris's regrets for not being able to testify with me here today.

National Service has a proud history of in the US. President Kennedy first called for a domestic volunteer program to complement the Peace Corps in the early 1960s. And that inspired President Johnson to create the volunteers in service to America Vista under the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Vista quickly expanded, was codified by Congress in the early 70s with the bipartisan Domestic Volunteer Service act, legislation that outlines the specific mission and goals of National Service in relation to the needs of the country.

Some years later the Corporation for National and Community Service or CNCS was founded to consolidate these efforts support the programs that were familiar with today. AmeriCorp, SeniorCorp and what was formerly known as Serve America. Today the Corporation for National Service is guided by the principles of putting the needs of local communities first, strengthening public-private partnerships and assisting with the accessibility of grant funding to rural and other economically distressed communities.

Most colleagues are familiar with the benefits and successes of AmeriCorps, a program established to provide opportunities for motivated and dedicated Americans to specifically engage in state and local projects. Every year over 80,000 Americans immerse themselves in these programs that address community needs or respond to disasters. I say most colleagues are aware of this, I actually don't think the general public is necessarily aware of the reach of AmeriCorps and the extent to which local organizations that participate in value are undergirded by AmeriCorps support Habitat for Humanity would be a good example.

You can scarcely imagine those habitat projects being organized in efficient way they are without the support of AmeriCorps. SeniorCorp largely developed under President Nixon has connected our nation's older generations with people organizations in need across the country. SeniorCorp members become coaches, mentors, contributing their career skills and expertise to the community. Here the trademark program is foster grandparents.

Most of us part have heard of that and we know that it enriches the lives of young people with volunteers age 55 and over serving local organizations committed particularly to the betterment of children. And then finally the social innovation fund catalyzes and mobilizes public and private funds to transform the impact that local non-profits have on communities.

As of March of last year, the social innovation fund leveraged \$295 million of federal investment to reach commitments of more than twice that value. So, National Service works by engaging young, people providing services to military families, helping communities succeed through service and then we need to understand the benefit this has to those who serve as well as those who are served.

Through service, highly motivated young Americans can participate in the career related service opportunities such as working with the community health core, increasing their experience, their earning potential as they give back to the community. Additionally, a generation held back by increasing student debt can now seek alternatives to paying for their education and we know National Service leverages substantial private investments from a small public investment.

In my district we host over 350 AmeriCorps volunteers, 162 SeniorCorp volunteers working with local universities, housing authorities, various non-profits. The young people who serve and not so young people who serve, have a lasting impact on my district and also the state, sustaining communities, allowing them to flourish for future generations. So, my colleagues, in this time of the political uncertainty, we need to remember that National Service is not partisan, its roots aren't partisan and the way it operates isn't partisan.

Republican presidents from Nixon to George W. Bush supported these programs and President Bush encouraged all Americans to devote 4000 hours of their lives to service in the aftermath of September 11th. So, I believe this is a goal implemented by a program, series of programs that we can agree on, giving new generation of young people a means to make a difference for the country.

So, thank you for the opportunity to advocate on behalf of the Corporation of National Service and its good works and to support the funding. Thank you.

COLE:

Good to have my friend's testimony always and just to make a quick point to reinforce the point that he made on bipartisanship. The last director who since retired when we (inaudible) by this committee very well and served under both the Democratic and Republican administration with great distinction. And in very bipartisan ways I thank my friend for his testimony and are there any other comments or questions?

DELAURO:

Just to say thank you, thank you for your continued support and advocacy for a program that really helps our young people understand what their responsibilities are and moral responsibility they have to their communities and to their country. We both lived through a time when this money was eliminated, but we saw the light on both sides of the aisle to make sure that the funding is there and it continues to be there.

And including the social innovation fund because of what it does with third parties and our hope is that we've got - I think, except for the Senate on the social innovation fund, the house side is very much supportive of what you are doing, Mr. Price and we would like to see what 2018 is about and we will advocate again and I know you will be. Thank you so much. Thank you.

COLE:

Any other questions or comments? Gentleman Price, thank you very much for your testimony and I see my good friend Mr. Long (ph) from Missouri's arriving and so he's recognized next up. Good to have my friend here and gentleman is recognized for five minutes, he can make whatever remarks he care to the committee.

LONG:

Good morning, Chairman Cole and Ranking Member Delauro and members of the subcommittee, thank you for allowing me to come before the subcommittee today to speak in support of AmeriCorps. A lot you all have met my oldest daughter K. Lynn who's a pediatrician. And those of you have helped her along the way and she was born on May 22nd, oldest daughter. On May 22, 2011 we were celebrating her birthday party, along with another friend of ours who had a birthday on the day before the day after hers and we were over at some friend's home who did not have a basement in it.

And it came over the news that there was a tornado right outside of town, Springfield, Missouri. There were really debris so we said hey this has to have a basement, we need to run home so we went to our house for the basement. It wasn't a tornado right outside of Springville, it was a tornado that struck in AF5 (ph), 70 miles away from Springfield, but there were hospital x-rays, that travel 70 miles and sat down right outside of Springfield.

So that was the power and strength of this tornado. That was May 22nd 2011, devastating (inaudible) tornado and the tornado killed 161 people and injured over 1000, destroyed 7000 homes. This is a town of 50,000 people, with a population more than 50,000 and 1500 square miles of tornado affected a considerable part of the city. People didn't know how to get around and the first thing the city did was go out and write street members names on the streets.

People lived in Joplin their whole lives couldn't find their way around. There were no trees, there were no landmarks, nothing left. The tornado tour passed 22 miles long, 6 miles wide major to EF 4 to EF5 and result in the greatest death toll from a single tornado in six decades, seventh worst in recorded history. Last night we had another tornado in Missouri that killed at least one individual.

I will never forget this catastrophic event and I am here today to testify the subcommittee on how AmeriCorps and a Corporation on financial and community service resources helped, my congressional district recover. And I'm going to tell you that this event changed my attitude on Congressman's role, a Senator's role, a President's role, a governor's role because before I always thought when I see a natural disaster and the President's role, a governor's role, a Senator's role and of a Congressmen, my attitude was, I bet the local people wish the President hadn't come, the Senator hadn't come or the Congressmen because they are right in the middle of the way trying to fix things but I was 180 degree wrong on that.

My role as a congressman was cemented in my mind that week, I spent eight days, I missed a full week of vote here in Washington. I stayed home, I was on the ground for eight days in a row in Joplin, Missouri. AmeriCorps, as many of you know the Corporation for National and Community Service, CNCS is an independent federal agency in one of the largest programs is AmeriCorps.

CNCS acts much like a foundation and is a nation's largest grant maker invested in a locally driven service and volunteering efforts and volunteering efforts focused on several high priority areas including disaster relief. CNCS funds more than 3000 organizations and is constantly expanding their reach and impact. The result of this investment are more engaged citizens, greater economic opportunity, less dependence on government and stronger communities.

National Service is a strong bipartisan history. As you know National services is historically bipartisan, politically popular and cost-effective strategy for engaging citizens, strengthening communities, creating jobs and uniting the nation. Over the past eight decades, presidents from both political parties have proposed and created with Congress programs that have enabled Americans to serve local communities for significant period of time. National Service helps local leader solve community challenges.

Through participation in AmeriCorps, National Service members help communities recover after natural disasters just like they did in Joplin, Missouri. National Service is extremely cost-effective. In 2015 CNCS generated \$1.26 billion in outside resources from private businesses, foundation and other sources, an amount exceeding the federal appropriation. Every federal dollar invested AmeriCorps is matched by more than \$2 from donations and in-kind support from non- CNCS sources, including business in philanthropy.

For every \$1 the federal government invested National Service there is nearly \$4 return on investment. Federal agencies can utilize National Service core members to perform duties that aligned with agency missions a low-cost like FEMA core, which is estimated to save \$60 million annually AmeriCorps members and volunteers were indispensable on the recovery efforts after the nation's deadliest tornado in nearly 60 years ripped Joplin, Missouri in my districts. Within hours after the tornado struck, AmeriCorps members arrived in Joplin to begin working with local authorities assisting in every way possible.

They established a missing person's hotline, removed tons of debris, provided homeowner assistance and casework operated donation and distribution warehouses, coordinated donations

and manage a large- scale voluntary operation. I would like to share some fast facts about AmeriCorps and the Joplin tornado.

359 AmeriCorps member served in Joplin, 76,000 hours served by AmeriCorp members, 75,000 volunteers coordinated through AmeriCorps recovery Center, 520,000 volunteer hours reported by AmeriCorps recovery center, 2200 volunteer groups registered, 2200 completed homeowner request, 6000 damage and need assessments completed, 20,000 meals served in the disaster area, 732 homes mucked or gutted, 130,000 total volunteers, including volunteers serving through other groups, 798,000 total volunteer hours, including volunteer serving to other groups.

In addition to all this, Joplin city officials reported that the city received donation resources in voluntary areas totalling \$17.7 million. AmeriCorps members were instrumental in coordinating this influx of volunteers and donations which effectively aided the recovery and saved the city more than \$17.7 million in disaster cost. As you can see the impact AmeriCorps members and volunteers had in my congressional district after devastating tornado we're indispensable to recovery efforts in Joplin.

Again, I appreciate the committee's continued willingness to listen to the views of members like myself. I know the full appropriations committee will face some tough decisions on spending priorities. For this reason, I respectfully ask for support of continued level funding to AmeriCorps and Corporation for National and Community Service.

COLE:

I want to thank the gentleman for his testimony and just note for the record, as he knows two years later almost to the day, my community went through precisely the same experience that yours did at Joplin and we got the same tremendous splendid help from AmeriCorps that you did. They employed dozens of people on the ground who were absolutely invaluable in recovery so I appreciate you being here making those statements, very important to the committee to hear things like that. Any other comments? OK

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you all.

COLE:

We appreciate very much and I'm going to recognize my good friend from Maryland, just in the order of people arrived, next up; good to have you here. Just so the committee knows, we got a joint host Red (ph), you know, splendid book on Isenhour (ph), so little plug there.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you again for that, Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

And some days you guys need to look at Mr. Delaney's bill and my bill on Social Security so we can fix that problem to a very bipartisan approach I think would be well advised in the administration and Congress to pick up and move along. With that, it's good to have my friend here, he is recognized for five minutes for whatever remarks he cares to make.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you my good friend Oklahoman and the Chairman of this committee. I would also like the Ranking Member and I want to applaud the whole committee for doing a members day like this. I am not sure what other committees do such a thing but in the category of someone always seeks best practices, this is obviously a best practice that every committee should pursue.

I come here today to speak about the topic of basic research in general and funding for the NIH in particular. I think everyone knows that NIH is really a singular institution, there is nothing quite like in the United States and quite frankly there is nothing quite like it in the world and it's very important to my state, the state of Maryland and it's very important to my district but it is really very important for the country and the world for that matter.

And our country faces very serious and significant issues as it relates to public health, human health and disease, and while we have made significant progress across the last several decades, I think much of that progress would fall under the category of incremental progress and we haven't really been able to make the transformative progress we really need to do again some of these conditions such as cancer, Alzheimer's, autism, the opioid addiction, crisis, terrible crisis in this country, and so many rare diseases that go unnoticed.

Although the President did point one out yesterday and I thought that was a high point of his remarks. And we're at a unique moment in time, if you think about the opportunities to really make transformative progress against these conditions. Several positive things are converging in the scientific community right, now computing power, big data, technologies that have emerged from the human genome project really position the research community to be probably in the best position they have been in a long period of time to really make some of those transformative games that we need to make.

Unfortunately, the private sector, which makes very important investments in research, is somewhat constrained right now because what's happening in corporate America driven by the dynamics of a market-based system which I am not drawing any judgments against but is clearly encouraged corporate America to have a much shorter time horizon as it relates to the investments that they make.

So if you think about it in the context of a time when it's never been better to make investments because of the technologies that are available yet the private sector in many ways is in the worst position to make investments they have ever been. It feels to me like this is an opportune time for the government to really increase its investment in basic research, which is what I am encouraging us to do here today.

And the good news is we have an institution that has a remarkable track record, not only in terms of the scientific discovery that they make and that is really their role, they really take scientific discovery and they translate it into human health and public health and disease solutions. So, even an institution that has unbelievable track record in doing this, both in terms of improving the lives of the people who are affected by these conditions, but also in terms of producing actionable research that has really transformed our economy.

In fact if you look back over 50 years of data, the number one investment the United States government has made in terms of anything that's material in terms of our budget, the best investment has been the investment in basic research. It has an economic multiplier of almost 3 to 1 and that's only counting the direct investment. So not only is investment in research, the humane thing to do, the moral thing to do, the things it will do will change the lives of so many people who are affected by these diseases and their families and their communities.

But it also makes good bottom-line sense for the country. If we actually score this differently, if we scored it dynamically, I think it would clearly be the conservative thing to do because, to the extent you can make investments that save money down the line, those are generally viewed as prudent fiscally conservative and smart things to do. So, again I want to thank the Chairman for giving me this opportunity.

The ranking member, I want to thank the whole committee for giving members the chance to talk about things they care about. Again, IH is very important. I think we're in unique moment in time when you think about externalities that have contributed to a dynamic where research can probably have the highest return on scientific discovery and investment in our lifetimes.

And I think we will miss this golden opportunity to really make, not the incremental progress, not the small steps that so many fabulous researchers, investigators and physicians and scientists have made across the last 10 years based on what's been available to them but to really make transformative progress move the ball far down the field and it can really transform our society and economy in many ways so that's what I want to chat with you here today.

And I appreciate here again Mr. Chairman you gave me this opportunity and again I applaud the committee for creating these chance for members.

COLE:

First of all we appreciate the testimony and in full disclosure we want to give gentleman Frelinghuysen credit here because he is the one that demanded that we do this in every sub-committee and I think it is an excellent suggestion on his part and we benefit from it. You are preaching to the choir on NIH here but it's a sermon we like to hear over and over and over again. This committee after three years in a row on a bipartisan basis, is made regular visits at the NIH.

Last year we had the largest increase in funding for NIH in a dozen years. That sounds like a big deal, but we've been flat funded basically. So we are just catching up. We also had the largest increase in Alzheimer's funding ever and very much agree with you, I mean that's an area we are spending \$170 billion odd a year taking care of Alzheimer's patients and if we could either cure or

you just slow down the disease, we could save billions of dollars and obviously much more importantly improve millions of lives.

So it's something this committee takes seriously if we can get the 17 bill out, the good news is that that we'll have another substantial increase for NIH and I want to complement frankly my good friend Roy Blunt and the Senate and Patty Murray is ranking member because they work hand-in-hand with us on this on that and have been leaders. It's been an area of bipartisan cooperation and believe me my friend's points are well made and agreed with on a bipartisan basis on this committee.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you Mr. Chairman.

DELAURO:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman and my colleague, this committees has had a history on a bipartisan race several years ago under the chairmanship of John Porter. We doubled the amount of money for the NIH. As the chairman pointed out, subsequently we have seen - you know that those numbers are decreased, but there was a substantial \$2 billion dollar increase on 2015 but so that you do know and you know your comments are appropriate that we are still \$7.5 billion below where we were in 2010.

And that means those discoveries, those young researchers that you are speaking about me not have an opportunity and we're very mindful of that on this committee and advocacy from people like yourself and others help us to close that gap but as importantly to get a larger allocation for the subcommittee that is one third of the non-defense discretionary budget in this country. Thank you.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you again.

COLE:

Thank you. I see my good friend from New Jersey is here so (inaudible) you're recognized, it's great to have you here before this committee and look forward to your testimony. The gentleman is recognized for five minutes for whatever remarks he cares to make.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you again, Mr. Chairman. I am here today as the co-chairman of the bipartisan heroine task force, and I appreciate the opportunity to testify today. I am here basically to strongly urge the subcommittee to remember and to take to heart the dire urgency of our heroine and opioid epidemic. It's claiming 33,000 American lives a year, we've taken important steps in authorizing funding in the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act and in 21st Century Cures. I have seen

as I am sure some of you have, this epidemic up close and personal. In my County, Ocean County, New Jersey, and New Jersey has a death rate from overdose three times the national average, and my home county is the epicenter in my state.

We are losing somebody from an overdose every 43 hours in my County, my constituents are losing friends, loved ones, colleagues. I have lost people that I know as well and perhaps you have as well. The damage that this crisis is causing is no respecter of geography, demographic differences, age, race, ethnicity, it doesn't discriminate. As a co-chairman of the bipartisan here in task force, I am very grateful for the work that's already been done to address the heroine and opioid epidemic.

With the passage of CARA and 21st Century Cures, we took great steps forward to help our communities. Both of these landmark pieces of legislation authorized funding to combat the epidemic and I am grateful that we recognize extreme importance of these appropriations by including both of funding for CARA and 21st Century Cures as budget anomalies and both continue resolutions last year.

Let me talk about CARA just for a moment. It authorized funding for numerous grant programs including helping states a purchase opioid reversal drugs like Narcan, helping states trained pharmacists and how to dispense opioid reversal drugs, helping states improve their substance monitoring programs, helping states train their first responders in how to administer opioid overdose reversal drugs, helping states, local governments, non-profits, Indian tribes, any group and area that has a high rate of heroin or opioid abuse expand their evidence-based treatment and intervention activities including medication assisted treatment or MAT services.

CARA helped recall recovery community organizations to develop and expand their services. It helped states treat pregnant and postpartum women who suffer substance abuse disorders. It helped education efforts drug monitoring programs. I could go on, CARA funded and supported a lot of state and local programs that help with treatment, prevention treatment and recovery. And I am grateful again for the work that we have done.

I would add as an aside, that last year in our continuing resolution, we passed - in the CR we include \$37 million for CARA Grant programs. 20 million went to the Department of Justice, and 17 million went to HHS, specifically the substance abuse and mental health services administration or SAMSA. That 17 million has yet to get out to the communities and I would encourage us to urge HHS to get past the bureaucratic delays and get these funds, they have already been appropriated. Let's get them out to the communities where they can do some good.

And then the 21st Century Cures also authorized \$1 billion over 2017 and 2018 to support state responses to the opioid abuse crisis. Congress appropriated 500 million of that in RCR budget anomaly last year. It's critically important that we appropriate the remaining \$500 million of those funds. 144 million Americans die every day to a drug overdose. Of those, 91 are dying from heroin or opioid -related overdose. Drug abuse is killing our communities and heroin and opioid abuse is driving the problem.

On behalf of myself, my bipartisan heroin task force, co-chair representative Ann Kuster from New Hampshire which is also been hit hard by this, on behalf of the over 80 members of the heroin task force and on behalf of all of the communities we represent, I beg you to consider fully funding the Comprehensive Addiction and Recovery Act, and the 21st Century Cures Act as it relates to opioid and heroin addiction in 2018.

And with that, I thank you for the opportunity to be here and to make my case. It's really a disturbing problem Chairman and we all need to do everything we can.

COLE:

I thank the gentleman for his testimony. Again, this is an area that the subcommittee does have tremendous interest in and tremendous bipartisan support for. I will happy to do we did last year. We would prefer regular order bill where we could do more and as my good friend from Connecticut has pointed out appropriately and correctly. A lot of what we can do will depend on what kind allocation we get, it really is that simple.

We cover a wide range year and you know, if we have a very substantial cut in our top-line funding and some things I know that my friend would want to do in this committee would want to do is simply won't be possible. So, we're waiting to see how that all plays out but (inaudible) makes a big difference and we're delighted you came to make the case and the committee very much on a bipartisan basis agrees with.

DELAURO:

Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. Thank you for your testimony. Congressmen Fitzpatrick testified as well on this issue and I would just let you know that as the Chair has said, there are several initiatives in the 2017 Labor HHS budget that deal with the mental health services SAMSA and the CDC in taking a look at the of assisting and trying to deal with monitoring programs with regard to opioids.

I would be remiss if I didn't mention this as I did to him. You need to take a hard look at what but maybe coming down the pipe with regard to Medicaid and Medicaid expansion, there's been a lot of discussion about that. Sometimes people don't realize all that that includes including the opportunity for people who are in the circumstances with regard to addiction to be able to get treatment.

That is the way they are getting their healthcare and if that is curtailed or cut back that we may see a lot larger numbers of people who are untreated. Certainly that's not the direction that you want to go or this committee wants to go and so I just mentioned that to you as well. Thank you very much.

(UNKNOWN)

I share your concern.

COLE:

The Chair recognizes for his first words in the official session here and a new member of our community, gentle lady from Massachusetts.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you Mr. Chair and I just want to again thank you for your advocacy and your work in picking up the leadership role on the caucus that none of us want to belong to. But we're forced to because this really is an equal opportunity killer and we will work with you in any way we can to help open up treatment and help are our neighbors and community members who are dying in our states and I also associate myself with the comments of the ranking member because Medicaid really is a lifeline for many of the families who are struggling.

So, thank you again for coming today. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

With that, gentle woman is excused. Thank you again for your testimony gentle lady from Texas, it's wonderful to have our good friend here so look forward to Ms. Jackson-Lee's testimony. Gentle lady is recognized for five minutes for whatever comments she cares to make to the committee.

LEE:

Mr. Chairman thank you to the Ranking Member, thank you to all of the members. Thank you very much. The evidence of your selection on this committee already indicates your understanding and your passion on these issues that I am a fan of Hubert Humphrey for just allow me to just offer his words, "the moral test of government is how it treats those who are in the dawn of life, the children, those who are in the twilight of life, the aged and those in the shadows of life, the sick, the needy and the handicapped."

And you have both the joy and pain having a committee that deals with all of these issues. I want to highlight this morning educational opportunity, health research and security economic opportunity work force safety and other programs that I think a very important. All of the past 48 hours the President has met with historically black colleges. I would imagine that they speak for a number of colleges they serve, underserved individuals and so the whole idea of having access to year-round pell grants.

It really meets people where they are in life and so I would hope that as you said Chairman Cole, it's all in the allotment of the appropriation that you get as a committee, but if you would consider that and as I understand and the President indicated his interest in year-round pell grants, 370 million for strengthening historically black colleges and universities in PPIs, which again deals with opportunity preparing the workforce for the 21st Century.

There are hundred historically black colleges in America and we believe each of them has found its niche serving people who are really first time generation students along with coming from Texas

Hispanic serving institutions as well and I know that we are looking, I know your affection and advocacy for Native Americans so we need to be able to include them in the educational stairs certainly in Texas.

They have a strong presence there as well. I support the robust funding for child care development Block Grant, and I thank you a Congresswoman DeLauro for your advocacy on those issues. The federal trio program which is low income and serve about 760,000, I like to emphasize 500 million for individuals with disabilities. I may strong advocate of community colleges and those with disabilities are able to access those colleges.

25 million for minority centers of excellence provide health professional schools, magnet school assistance is the only federal education grant program designed to reduce racial and socioeconomic segregation. There have been some question about magnet programs, but I have seen them bring people of disparate economic backgrounds together; \$25 million for a construction for historically black colleges.

A huge commitment; my daughter is on the Harris County school board and there was a rumor that they were going to get rid of Head Start and they had more people in their board meeting than they have ever seen in their life of service, fighting to not eliminate Head Start and so I vigorously supported 50 years old plus but there is such evidence that it was 10 billion for Head Start. 5.1 billion for community health centers and I will focus little bit on that.

I can't tell you how effective federally qualified health community centers are. I don't think I have enough in my congressional district or the state of Texas, and I remember President Bush and our GW head had a debate about how many were in Texas and I think he found out that I won at that time of his leadership that we had not grown them. They are growing now and they really do serve in the capacity that we want them to do.

The National Institutes of Health, there is no doubt about medical researcher last evening. The President spoke about rare disease. 34.5 billion I think is with the Cures Act and number of other advocacies that we need to get in front of the healthcare system. Just heard a report this morning about more people born in the 1990s have the rectal cancer and we are seeing new diseases every day. So I would appreciate your consideration on \$302 million for The National Institute of Minority Health and Health Disparities. One of the first amendments I offered as a new member of Congress was around the health disparities and that agency or that area in HHS.

35 man to fully support the CDC's childhood lead poisoning, which still exists, \$10 million for the violence against women; I am a strong supporter for school-based health clinics, they've sort of maybe sort of -- some they go up, some go down; some schools are doing, some are not but 2 million students nationwide are being held, and there are many students in schools where school nurses can detect conditions at home and also school-based clinics can help the family have access to healthcare.

\$50 million for Homeless Veterans Reintegration Program, that is one of the major areas on behalf of veterans is particularly homeless is once they get housing; how do they get reintegrated, their health conditions and all that is important. \$327 million for family planning and of course in

compliance with the law; 4,200 health clinic centers nationwide provides important screening for cancer, HIV, family planning services.

On the economic opportunity and workforce, I am a big supporter and I hope that you will consider it. It has been around for 50 years but that is a Job Core Program. I think more of our youth need to be in the Job Core Program as opposed in the Game Core Program. And the job core courses, people go away at 126 campuses and 50 states, I don't know whether we have an ability to expand them but I would just say that they generate more than it might seem in terms of cost.

If you can get people out of their element and give them skills, this 1.78 Bill, it is an amazing reformation to get a city kid and put them in a rural area and focus on changing their life, their skills and what their commitment is. Certainly the support of the nursing workforce; I support the \$600 million for OSHA. We are known for a safe workplace.

Finally, let me offer the support for services for survivors of torture; \$400 million for trafficking victims, and \$2 million for refugee and infant assistance. So I closed with two points and that is on the refugee resettlement. We have been dealing with refugees in my community for decades.

Let me be very frank, in the course of all of the discourse and hysteria my state is not participating but my agencies are; and they are settling of Syrian refugees, they are settling over the years Vietnamese refugees, they are settling refugees from Somalia, they are settling refugees from China, to a certain extent people who are fleeing prosecution but the point is that they are very important.

And I hear the gavels, so the last point is Mr. Chairman is, that I am - this is not the authorization committee, but I am absolutely opposed to the repeal of the Affordable Care Act and I think there will be a great burden on the appropriations, HHS Subcommittee if the Affordable Care Act is repealed and we are without the safety net for the American people.

And I thank you for your indulgence. I yield back now.

COLE:

Now I think the gentle lady is, as usual, her testimony is thoughtful and comprehensive and we're very grateful to have it.

(UNKNOWN)

Many, many thanks. The programs you mentioned have a profound effect on people's lives and that's what this committee does, so we're mindful, thank you very much.

(UNKNOWN)

Appreciated, thank you. Gentle lady from New Hampshire is now recognized. It's good to have you here Ms. Kuster. You are recognized for five minutes to address whatever concerns or make whatever remarks you care to make to the subcommittee.

KUSTER:

Thank you so much Mr. Chair, I appreciate it and to our Ranking Member and all my colleagues, thank you so much. Well, it's an honor to be before all of you and my remarks will be succinct.

I am here to request full funding of all addiction programs across all agencies within Department of Health & Human Services. And I also ask the committee to ensure full funding for both the Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act and the 21st-Century Cures Act.

I am the Founder and Co-Chair, and I think you just heard from my Co-Chair Mr. MacArthur of the very successful bipartisan heroine task force. We represent more than 85 Members of Congress, both sides of the aisle and we're very proud of the work that we did last year, passing 18 Bills in the House and the funding in CARA, thank you for all your work on that and the 21st-Century Cures.

But these programs are incredibly important to address really what has become a nationwide crisis around substance use disorder and particularly opioid abuse and misuse. In 2015 the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention found that over 50,000 people died due to drug overdoses and the primary driver is opioids and heroin use.

This crisis is not showing any signs of slowing down, in fact, The National Institute On Drug Abuse reports that opioid misuse is on the rise and at a rate that overshadows all other controlled substances. The epidemic transcends all demographics at this point and all regions of the country, not just in urban areas by any means, but rural communities, our red states, blue states; I frequently say to my colleagues, the heroine doesn't choose the R's and D's and neither can we.

My largely rural home State of New Hampshire has become a new focal point for the crisis. In 2015 the granted state suffered the second-most overdoses per capita in the nation for opioid overdoses and I include in that a new drug, synthetic opioid known as fentanyl, that's given us all a new cause for concern.

Our task force had a hearing just two weeks ago on synthetic drugs and fentanyl is known for extreme potency, 10 times or more stronger than heroin and we are suffering the largest loss of life per capita. We've become truly a trafficking corridor and it's led to many tragic deaths including my constituent, Carl Messenger, who was a young man, just finished college.

He actually had been to treatment and was in recovery but sadly he got a chest cold and took a medication that contain the opioid codeine and unbeknownst to him or his family that triggered drug- seeking behavior and he ended up within 24 hours, reaching out calling a dealer. His mother who is with us in D.C., she was my guest last night, found him on the bathroom floor from death due to overdose of 100 percent fentanyl.

So we have built that is unrelated to your committee, but called Carl's law about labelling but I do bring that up just because the funding in The Comprehensive Addiction Recovery Act and The

21st Century Cures Act is so important; education, prevention, expanding treatment, long-term recovery, and of course, the law enforcement.

In CARA, Congress authorized dozens of new grant programs designed specifically to address this crisis. And in total, CARA authorized a \$181 million in annual funding. In The Cures Act, Congress authorized an unprecedented billion dollars over two years dedicated specifically to combating this public health crisis and the money would be given straight to the states and provided flexibility to design programs best suited for the response in their community.

And I am pleased to note last week, the granted state submitted its request for over \$3 million in funding allocated to New Hampshire for 2017, but 2018 will need to be appropriated by this committee. Of course, Caring Cures represented only a part the coordinated response, organizations like SIMSA, the CDC, the FDA, and certainly NIH are critical for addressing the crisis.

And while opioids are the most clear and present danger surrounding substance abuse today, it's certainly not the only danger. And more importantly, it does not occur in a vacuum and I want to point out that the testimony to our task force from the CDC is that four out of every five heroin users has a co-occurring mental health disorder, and so I also urge you to fully fund mental health treatment as well.

And I thank you and I've ended up on-time. Thank you so much, I appreciated in.

COLE:

Appropriately pointed out in your testimony, and this committee will continue to work on a bipartisan basis trying to address those concerns which all of us share and all of us have in our respective district. It's just a tragedy unfolding before us and it would be a tragedy if the committee didn't have the means to do what needs to be done in this area.

KUSTER:

Thank you very much.

(UNKNOWN)

Many, many, many thanks for your advocacy, and not it just got words for what they call operational, you make things happen which is outstanding.

And I said to you and I know Congresswoman Clark is on the media task force and others; you need to help us with that calling for what is a bigger allocation for the subcommittee so that we can address some of the incredibly serious needs that you have outlined including mental health services and other kinds of services.

KUSTER:

And this no-sure long-term recovery and I was pleased last night that the President mentioned treatment. He and all the other candidates got quite an education in our first of the nation primary. I don't think they expected to come to New Hampshire and talk about heroin but that's - they learned a lot and I think I've just had a meeting this week with the Interim Director of The Office of Drug Policy; I am hoping we'll get the Director soon.

So we'll continue to work with you. Thank you very much for your kind words. Thank you.

COLE:

I appreciate it very much. Next, my good friend from New York, Mr. Faso is recognized. It's great to have you here. And the gentleman is recognized for five minutes for whatever comments he cares to make.

FASO:

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member DeLauro, and members of the committee. It's a pleasure to be here. I have prepared remarks which I will just ask to be submitted for the record, and I just like to recognizing the committee's time constraints to just like the subs to summarize my remarks.

And this relates to The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program funded through the Department of HHS. As you know, this program was created in 1991, it is really important in the Northeast, in areas of our State in New York and I know many other areas of the Northeast. Rural areas do not have access to lower-cost natural gas, home heating oil, and propane or wood or often the primary sources of heating once home.

A recent survey of lye (ph) heat, The Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program participants show that how these households are the most at risk in the nation. According to HHS more than 70 percent of lye (ph) heap recipient households contained at least one vulnerable person. This includes seniors over 60, children under five, or individuals with disabilities. Many of these recipients have a history of just simply not being able to pay their home energy needs in the Northeast and for the winter. Nearly 50 percent skipped or paid less than their entire bill and almost 40 percent received a notice to disconnect or to discontinue their electricity or their home heating fuel.

Two years ago we had a ferocious winter, it was very cold in the Northeast and we have been - it's been a bit warmer; although our snow - our ski area is perhaps aren't as happy about that -- in last winter certainly, this winter they had a little bit of a reprieve on that but home heating oil is an extraordinarily expensive form of energy. It was nearly \$4 a gallon two years ago. I know it because I pay it myself at our home in Kinderhook (ph).

And it is vitally important that the committee take cognizance of this important program for low income residents and seniors and disabled people throughout the nation, but particularly the Northeast. So I would appreciate the committee's consideration and serious thought about funding

level for lye heap (ph) and make sure that we have a level that is adequate and sufficient to meet the needs for folks in the winter.

And with that I will conclude my testimony and give you an extra two minutes and 30 seconds. Mr. Chairman.

COLE:

Of course, we'll take advantage of your generosity. And just -- I want to first begin by thanking the gentlemen for his testimony.

It's an important issue and maybe the prior administration actually reduced life finding in its budget request by about \$300 million to \$400 million, we restored that in our Bill on this committee and added \$100 million beyond it because again, on a very bipartisan basis we do think it's a serious problem and the so the gentlemen's advocacy is certainly noted and appreciated and at the end of the day, number one, help us get the '17 Bill out. If we do, you will like what's in it and then from this perspective certainly.

And then beyond that you know, what we can do next year ultimately depends on what our allocation is going to be.

DELAURO:

Thank you so much and thank you for telling the tale of the Northeast. We both have experienced the case where we're looking at particularly older Americans, seniors, where they don't heat their food to the temperature that's healthy, they are putting towels in front of doors in order to keep the cold out and July HEAP is such -- so critically important and it really is a lifeline for so many. So I appreciate your advocacy, if we can get the '17 bill out, we want you to get to your friends on the Senate side and tell them to exceed to the house number which is a higher number. So you've got your job cut- out for you there and help us get a higher allocation for 2018 my friend.

FASO:

Well, Ms. DeLauro, I've only been here two months but I'll do my best.

DELAURO:

Alright, very good. Thank you.

COLE:

And just for the record, I've spent two years in the gentle ladies district going to college, actually. So it is cold.

DELAURO:

It's cold.

COLE:

It is cold. Thank you. With that I see my good friend from Pennsylvania has arrived and I want to recognize him for whatever testimony he cares to give and on his way I want to thank him for his extraordinary advocacy for the mentally ill and what he was able to accomplish in the Cures Bill and making sure that his legislation was merged into that and this country began to address a problem that frankly at the federal level we have long ignored.

So my friend is recognized for five minutes for whatever testimony he cares to give.

(UNKNOWN)

Well, you've laid out the problem that's before us and we're still too far to go. I'll remember that innocence was shattered on the cold in Connecticut just over four years ago. At Sandy Hook Elementary School in Connecticut, but out of the darkness -- the darkest of tragedy has risen a glimmer of hope; as we did pass at Landmark Mental Health Reforms signed into Law in December 13, 2016 as part of the 21st Century Cures Act.

As I wrote in the Pittsburgh post-Gazette back in 2012 following the New Town tragedy, I'd say "the common factor in too many mass tragedies is an underlying mental illness, the license for Americans from the horrifying tragedy is that we had better take-off our blinders and deal with such illnesses or we are sure to face the same problem again. It's not only what's in a person's hands that make their ex-violent, it's what is in their mind."

Against that backdrop in 2013, the Committee on Energy & Commerce spearheaded by the subcommittee and oversight investigation which I chair, we've got a national conversation jump starting the process would result in enactment of the first conference reforms in 50 years. Our multi-year bipartisan bicameral effort revealed a broken system and informed our legislative response to overhaul the antiquated patchwork of ineffective programs.

Mental illness is no longer subject whispered in hushed tones and the shadowy silence. About what more remains to (inaudible) to help families and individuals in mental health crisis. The end of November 2016, while Bill language was still being finalized; I made the observation that these problems are too large and work so dear that we won't sell the mess of our Mental Health System with one bill.

But the final bill came a long way, we didn't get everything we wanted but we wanted everything we've got. It was my pleasure the patients and families with medical crisis as is now they won't stop fighting to deliver treatment before tragedy. That's why I'm here this morning to ask you help to translate the historic promises we made the families on mental crisis into commitments and actions that will improve and save lives.

The top changes are the improvements it makes to leadership and accountability that federal level for mental health and substance abuse programs. Bidding with the new office at the Assistant

Secretary of Mental Health & Substance Abuse Disorders, it's a position I hope and trust will be filled by a doctor, a psychiatrist or a psychologist.

They are offering families with mental crisis format authorize a number of existing programs that will be at SAMSA or HSS. These include support for the assisted out-patient treatment grant programs which is a court order treatment for individuals with serious mental illness who meet very strict legal criteria. Often they are too ill to recognize they need medical care, but by assuring's timely and effective treatment we have found that while protecting their rights.

We also find that reduces rearrest and rehospitalizations and homelessness and other negative outcomes by over 70 percent. That is a show no court order treatment in the community reduces taxpayer costs and cuts them in half. With that in mind, the legislation increases an extensive existing authorization for grant program at AOT at SAMSA for some \$20 million, it's essential we do this.

Also addressing pressing concerns is the shortage of qualified Medhoc professionals. Half the counties in this country have no psychiatrist, no psychologist, no clinical social worker. And where there is no help, there is no hope. Through this bill, we also strengthen the mental and behavioral health network workforce through education training grants, clarification and eligibility for loan repayment programs and quantification of the Secretary's Minority Fellowship Program.

And exercise to strengthen program supporting mental health and substance abuse disorders care for women, children, adolescents in an area that is a priority for all of us, including the White House.

Now these are a few of the programs I mentioned. I'll hand over things over to Mr. Chairman for this, but I do want to say that I understand budgets are tight but with over 350,000 people dying this country last year related to mental health problems; that's more people that have died in the combined U.S. combat roles in World War I, Vietnam, Korea, Bosnia, Desert Storm, Iraq and Afghanistan. This invested money will save lives.

And with that I'll take any questions.

COLE:

I want to again thank my good friend for his distinguish advocacy here. You pushed Congress in the right direction in this area more than anybody, probably that served here in half a century.

So believe me, we take what you have to say very seriously and to means were available than we're going to assume what we can to address the problem and hopefully begin to do so and sustain ongoing fashion because it's a problem that obviously you don't solve in the year.

And what we're going to have problems in perpetuity but my friend has made a really good start in focusing congressional interest on this and frankly educating the rest of us about this with your own distinguished background in psychology. So thank you my friend.

(UNKNOWN)

I wish my appearance would have been (inaudible).

DELAURO:

I very much thank my colleague who many years ago and they -- when I had a stress fracture of my hip when there was -- we were at the time of right after 9/11 and we were at told to evacuate the Capitol Hill, Mr. Chairman, along with another member literally picked me up and got me out of the building and onto where we needed to be. That having happened three times I figured the next time I was just going to stay and take my chances.

But thank you, thank you for your great work and your commitment to this effort. Over and over again, the issue becomes there are not enough services, not enough treatment centers, not enough places for people to get the kind of treatment that they need and that's particularly true for children and in my view, and this is a public health crisis and we need to treat it that way.

I would ask your help out with regard to advocacy for the mental health block grant, and in this case, Mr. Chairman, the Senate is higher than the House in this regard, but we know that this this block grant, which is a mainstay for states and the services that they can provide is historically below levels at which it's been and we need to look at that in a way that prioritizes the resources for the biggest problems that we have in this nation and this is clearly one of the biggest problems that we have in this nations.

So I thank you for your great work and your advocacy.

COLE:

I can't continue now and I'm passing on to my claimant to do that. I know I've met with some governors and told them that outpatient care for the mentally ill is 20 times cheaper than jail. And with so -- but I should also tell you the energy and commerce; what we found out is states are not keeping that data, they simply don't know what they don't know.

As they do that I think they will do a better job of this, and I believe it's part of the legislation we need.

DELAURO:

Do we require that?

(UNKNOWN)

No. They've got to start collecting data and individuals to look at their lifetime of the illness costs because when they go over to emergency rooms at \$2,000 or \$3,000 a day, outpatient care which is few thousand a year, couple of thousand a year versus jail (ph) which will be \$40,000 a year, not to include -- that doesn't even include all the other criminal justice activities that goes with it;

and really turning mental illness into a criminal justice problem, it is not a crime to be mentally ill, we make it a crime and that's a despicable thing we do in this country.

These are small grants when I said you could reduce arrests and incarceration by 70 percent and this is not to do all that but just to get states to start that I believe will be able to discover themselves.

DELAURO:

Well maybe we can talk about how - you know, with - I'm not talking about unfunded mandates on states attention because we can't go down that road, that's always a problem, but to think about how we might be able to look at collecting the data then which allows us to make determinations that are beneficial. I'd love to talk about what you on that.

COLE:

I thank the gentleman for his testimony.

(UNKNOWN)

Thank you. I'll leave these all materials.

COLE:

Thank you very much. And we have our last witness of the day, Mr. Panetta. Welcome to the community and as always - you must get tired hearing this, but we all admire your father so much that you were always going to mention his distinguished service in this institution where he went on to serve the country so well as the White House Chief of Staff and Director of the CIA and obviously Secretary of Defense; just extraordinary career and a heavy burden for you, I am sure. But what a wonderful mentor and role model you have. So as we're delighted to have you here.

PANETTA:

Thank you, Chairman. I really appreciate that.

COLE:

Gentleman is recognized for five minutes for whatever testimony he cares to give.

PANETTA:

Thank you very much, Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro. I appreciate those opening comments, it's something I've grown up with, I'm used to it and I admit there are some pretty big shoes to fill but I just look at it makes me - it makes me a better person, makes me work harder. Thank you.

As you know I am new to Congress although I grew up with my father in this position for 16 years, it's still new to me and it is quite an honor that I get the chance to sit here in front of you and provide this testimony. So thank you for this opportunity.

I hail from - I grew up on the Central Coast of California, the 20th Congressional District in California, a place where you may know John Steinbeck held from; he wrote a lot about that area and he also wrote in his writings a lot about the quest for the American Dream.

Today I submit to you that that dream and our values are best served when we fund our educational programs. That is why I am here to urge you to provide strong funding for Title I: Headstart, CAMP and HEAP, and the trio programs in districts like mine that have large gaps in educational attainment; these programs are crucial to supporting student development so that every child may write their own version of that American Dream.

The Headstart Program serves children who would not otherwise benefit from early education with hands-on learning and wraparound services. That is why I respectfully request that no less than the fiscal year 2017 funding level for that program. In my district, Headstart operates seven programs and serves 2,680 children from infancy to age five. Headstart's community engagement in particular, lifts families up from poverty.

For example, there is a family in my district that started their own Day Care business after receiving job training from Headstart, that is an excellent example of leveraging a modest investment in Headstart into an economic livelihood for a formally low income family.

Before I came to Congress I was a gang prosecutor in Monterey County. I saw first-hand the effects of limited access to a quality education and wraparound services. I saw too many kids appear in front of me in the courtroom when they should have stayed and been in the classroom. Title I levels the disparities between schools that are overwhelmed by diverse set of students like limited proficiency learners.

I represent 47 Title I school districts and I do firmly believe that the kids in those schools need to be better served. I urge this committee to increase Title I funding above the fiscal year '17 level and to also find up to \$1 billion for the students up - for the student support and the academic enrichment grants. I believe that those two complementary funds target the underserved schools, and that can ensure an equitable education for all students.

The central coast is also aptly named not just the most beautiful district in the nation, but also the salad bowl of the world. There is a lot agriculture there and it relies - directly relies and directly benefits from seasonal worker populations. I realize that many of them are from Latin America, but I have to tell you that their roots are now in our communities. They work hard, they pay taxes, and yes, they do in the pursuit of the American Dream.

One of my local community colleges, Hartnell College, has close to 800 students who can be called dreamers, who apply - fall under the DACA Program. Camphamp and the trio programs serve those populations with the targeted support that they need, including one-on-one counselling to

ensure at where student stay in school and the financial aid assistance to ensure high school students graduate attend and succeed in college.

These programs drive economic mobility for these first-generation low-income students as well as their families. That's why I request no less than the fiscal year '17 funding level for those critical programs.

And finally, I come to come before you today to promote student loan forgiveness through public service. I was a grandson of - I'm the grandson of Italian immigrants and we learned that the American Dream is to give your children a better life. We are always told in my family though because we were allowed to live the reality of that dream then we darn well better give back to the country and community that gave us so much.

That sentiment is why I'm in front of you today, there is - I believe that firmly and I believe that young people want to live up to that ideal, and to serve as well. Yet I believe that they are hindered by the cost of their own education including an enormous student loan debt. That is why I would like to see the expansion of student loan forgiveness through public service, so I urge the committee to strengthen and expand the public service programs that fall under that jurisdiction.

As a member of Congress, as members of Congress; all of us strive to improve the well-being of our constituents and of course our country. Education is the incubator of American innovation, prosperity and economic equality. Education builds a foundation of success for our future generations. All of the programs I have referenced are crucial not only to my district but to our country because all of the programs help our children and our families achieve the American Dream. Thank you very much.

COLE:

I want to thank the gentleman for his testimony and say I do know some of your areas because I read your dad's book, Worthy Five, 720 section is one of the best one of these things that there is to read. And so I know a little bit about your roots and your community through that; and I want to thank you for your advocacy here for these programs.

Frankly, we agree very much the prior administration put an emphasis on early childhood, we couldn't always match every dollar but we increased it every year. And particularly where Headstart was concerned, well I think they broke some new ground that needed the research as pretty clear on this, needed to be broken and I think at that level we matched them dollar for dollar or pretty close. I know we did that lately as last year.

The Trio program is - I share your admiration for; actually this committee has actually gone well above the prior administration in the Senate, both last year and if we get that '17 bill out, we will again at some level - I've seen the same thing; I've represented the district that has these same kind of challenges in terms of a lot of first-generation kids that nobody has ever gone to college before.

So things like gear up and things like Trio that prepare them so that if they get the opportunity and obviously the Trio program, they have the opportunity, they go ahead and succeed because they

need a level of support and mentorship frankly that with the best flow in the world, the most supportive family, if nobody's ever gone to college before knowing exactly how to prepare to get there and do exactly what you need to succeed there is (inaudible) for a lot of our young people.

So there are great programs, these are things this committee believes in very strongly on a bipartisan basis. We look forward to working with you to try and dome and again, what we can do and I'm going to say this in my closing remarks, and then allow my good friend to say whatever she cares.

It really does depend on the allocation that we get and that we're still in a little bit of a suspense about that; we will be for a while but again, if we get a good allocation then a lot of the concerns that my friend has expressed, the programs that he has championed or programs that you will find bipartisan support for on this committee, but that's - you know, that will be the big issue for us, we'll live within the allocation we have but higher is better, it's a little bit easier for us to make this -- we try to prioritize appropriately on this committee and we try to do it in a bipartisan way.

But again, these are tough decision sometime because we have competing goods out there. We don't think we have a lot of bad programs to fund, we just think we have competing needs and limited amount of resources. Again, I thank my friend for being here and we recognize my good friend, the Ranking Member for whatever remark she cares to make in closing the committee hearing.

DELAURO:

Thank you very, very much. It's - I'm really delighted to have you before the sub-committee. I want to thank you for your eloquence. We share a common heritage and I can recall vividly visiting my mother and it was - I didn't realize the method to her madness until I was an adult when she worked in the old sweatshops as a garment worker in the city of New Haven.

She had me go up to see her and when it was about and she would admonish me and say get an education so that you don't have to do this. Those words ring in my head everyday as I know that they do with you and with your family background; and it's so true of so many families of our ethnic heritage and others.

And the Chairman is right, this has been a committee that has been a strong supporter of Title I of Trio of Gearup, all of these efforts, and I think we both thought with -- or at least had discussions with the prior Secretary of Education and the role of early childhood education how we ought to spend substantial amounts of money on early childhood education.

I would just say this to you and we mentioned this earlier and the Chairman did as well; if we are going to be looking at \$54 billion increase in defense and I come from a defense dependent state, I have to say this that that means that this subcommittee which is about one- third of non-defense discretionary spending; so after defense we are the committee with the largest portfolio; that means we're looking about \$18 billion in a cut if that were to occur.

That would - that just would be truly devastating. We couldn't sustain the needs of the programs that are under our jurisdiction. So I think we have to look very, very carefully at our budgets in terms of our values and our priorities; and education in my view has to be the highest priority that we are engaged in a commitment because it is the great equalizer. It really doesn't focus on your background, your income, your religion, your political party; it's about your God-given talent.

That's what this is about and I think we have to look very carefully at the benefits of the budget and the largess of the budget and where those dollars are going in education, should not be short-changed. So as the Chairman pointed out, we look for your advocacy when we're talking about what the share of the Labor HHS Subcommittee should receive in terms of an allocation in order to meet the needs, so many of which you've outlined through this morning. So thank you so much for being here. I appreciate it.

COLE:

The gentle-lady yield for just one quick comment?

DELAURO:

I'd be happy to.

COLE:

I hate to hand you more ammunition but you know, you talk about the defense and non-defense. I know you will actually, that's why I'm handling the clip over to you, but it's not like we're going to cut veterans or homeland. So actually the share that would fall on this committee would be greater probably than even my friend has suggested.

And I'll say it again, we'll live within our allocation, we'll do our job as what we have and - but you can't balance the budget on the back of non-discretionary and veteran related and homeland; there is just not enough money that we could take every single dime of all the other subcommittees and you still be running - we're really talking about roughly a \$400 billion pot of money, it's a lot of money, but you could eliminate it all, you still be running deficits of about \$200 billion a year.

So, we're going to have to look to other ways in my view. But again, governing is about making choices and the choices are made, we'll live within those choices. But I want to tell my friend that I appreciate her advocacy; we don't always agree on everything but we agree more than most people around here realize. And I appreciate the passion with which she approaches her job, in which she - in the manner in which she represents the interests of the people that this committee is really important to because they are in many, many cases the most vulnerable people, the most needy people; amongst this and my friends passion and concern is genuine and well placed.

With that we close the hearing. Thank you.