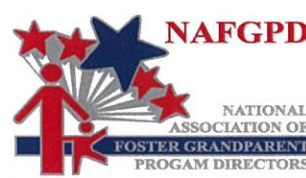




National Association of RSVP Directors



April 5, 2017

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education,
and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
135 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Members
Senate Labor, Health and Human Service, Education,
and Related Agencies Appropriations Subcommittee
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Blunt and Ranking Member Murray,

We are writing as Presidents of the National Association of RSVP Directors (NARSVPD), the National Association of Foster Grandparents Program Directors (NAFGPD), and the National Senior Corps Association (NSCA) to register our members' strong opposition to President Trump's Fiscal Year 2017 proposals to eliminate the Corporation for National and Community Service and the three Senior Corps programs -- RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions --, as well as AmeriCorps and other the national service efforts it administers. This misguided proposal sees service as a cost rather than a benefit to the volunteers, the communities they serve, and to the nation.

We agree with President Trump that it is critically important to identify and support the most cost-effective ways to meet the needs of Americans. Senior Corps mobilizes seniors who volunteer their skills and experiences to meet vital community needs at low cost. RSVP volunteers do not receive a stipend for their service. Foster Grandparent and Senior Companion volunteers, both programs targeted at helping low-income seniors volunteer, do receive an hourly stipend of \$2.65 per hour. This small stipend enables those living on limited incomes to serve at no cost to themselves.

We strongly believe that Senior Corps programs provide a cost-effective solution to address many unmet needs in our communities. RSVP, Foster Grandparents, and Senior Companions **enable more than 270,000 senior volunteers to provide essential services to their neighbors that local, county, and state governments cannot afford to replace.** All senior volunteers reap the mental and physical benefits that come from remaining active and helping their neighbors.

Through RSVP more than 230,000 seniors across the country are connected to volunteer opportunities with over 38,000 local organizations. Not only does RSVP ensure that senior volunteers' skills are best matched to a local organization, it also guarantees that volunteers' time is used to satisfy whatever unique needs their community may have. Among other activities, **RSVP volunteers play a key role in staffing feeding programs like Meals on Wheels and providing services to veterans and military families.**

The Foster Grandparent Program matches low-income senior volunteers with at-risk and special needs children in schools, youth shelters, and correctional facilities. The presence of a Foster Grandparent has a marked improvement on the reading skills, school attendance, and behavior of the over 189,000 children they mentor. **Without Foster Grandparents, local schools and facilities would not be able to afford to pay for the individual attention that these children need to keep up with their peers.**

The Senior Companion Program matches low-income senior volunteers with frail or disabled elderly individuals who are homebound enabling them to remain in their own homes and avoid living in a costly long-term care facility. **Almost 43,000 frail and disabled Americans can continue living on their own because of Senior Companion volunteers, saving the federal government millions of dollars in Medicare and Medicaid.** Senior Companions are often the only reason that frail or disabled senior citizens can remain in their homes.

Senior Corps volunteers provide unique and special services to their communities. It takes incredible dedication and compassion to help the frail elderly with their daily activities, children with disabilities to find success in the classroom, or comfort and companionship to seniors living alone in rural areas. These programs and their volunteers provide much-needed services at an extremely low cost. All Senior Corps programs have a required non-federal funding match, which is often met by local and state governments, non-profits, and the private sector.

We take seriously the federal deficit; however, Senior Corps ensures that local needs are met at minimal cost to the taxpayers. Senior Corps programs are public-private partnerships in which grantees provide a non-federal match. CNCS estimates that in 2017 states and local communities will contribute an estimated \$91 million, in cash and in-kind.

We believe that all three Senior Corp programs have made efficient use of federal dollars to provide for real and positive changes in not only the lives of hundreds of thousands of seniors, but also to the communities they serve. We urge you to reject the President's FY17 proposal to eliminate CNCS and its valuable programs.

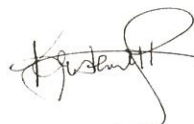
Sincerely,



Betty Ruth
President
NARSVPD



Lynnetta Kopp
President
NSCA



Kristen Tracy
President
NAFGPD