

April 25, 2013

Re: Support comprehensive measures to end sequestration, not piecemeal approaches

Dear Senator:

Every day across the country, sequestration is cutting more deeply into critical federal supports for vulnerable Americans – mostly women and children. These cuts may not garner as much press attention as recent flight delays, but for the people affected, the consequences are far more severe.

For example, poor children in California, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, New Jersey, Ohio, South Carolina, and Tennessee, are losing Head Start services. Seniors in Illinois, Indiana, and Maine are losing meals on wheels. Families in New Orleans and Fairfax County, Virginia have lost the rental assistance vouchers they waited years to get. Child care assistance, women's health services, and services for survivors of domestic violence are also facing cuts. In addition, because women represent a majority of teachers and other public sector employees, their jobs are particularly at risk from cuts to education and other public services. And women who have already lost their jobs and depend on federal emergency unemployment benefits to make ends meet as they search for work are seeing those benefits cut by an average of 11 percent.

It is past time for Congress to act to end the full range of hardships caused by sequestration. Majority Leader Reid has tried to put before the Senate an end to this year's sequestration cuts, paid for with savings from reduced expenditures in Iraq and Afghanistan. We applaud that effort, just as we favor increased revenues from corporations and high-income individuals and other common-sense Pentagon savings as alternatives to sequestration. There are many ways to end sequestration, certainly including cancellation of a year or two of the cuts to avoid damage to our fragile economic recovery.

We urge you to support comprehensive measures to end sequestration, such as Leader Reid's, and to oppose piecemeal proposals that ignore the needs of vulnerable women and families.

Sincerely yours,



Joan Entmacher
Vice-President, Family Economic Security
National Women's Law Center