

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-0520**

Testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on

Labor Health and Human Services and Education

Honorable Jimmy Panetta CA-20

March 1, 2017

Although new to Congress, I keenly understand the importance of the Appropriations Committee's annual check on our nation's priorities through the power of the purse. I am proud to represent the region that John Steinbeck detailed in his tales of the American Dream. I offer my testimony as I firmly believe that our nation's values are best served by funding the programs that foster the American Dream.

Therefore, I write to advocate for strong education funding. Federal funding for programs such as Title I, Head Start, CAMP and HEP, and TRIO are crucial to support student development so that every child may write their own version of the American Dream.

For this reason, I respectfully advocate for no less than the FY17 funding level for Head Start Head. A critical component of Head Start is family engagement. A family in my district started their own day care business after receiving job training from Head Start. This is an excellent example of leveraging a modest investment in Head Start into an economic livelihood for a formerly low income family.

I request robust funding for the 47 Title I school districts in my district and the rest of the nation. This targeted funding levels disparities between students who all deserve an equitable education. I urge the Committee to support an increase in funding for Title I from the FY17 level and \$1 billion for the Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants.

As the Salad Bowl of the World, my agricultural district directly benefits from a large seasonal worker population. They have strong roots in our communities, work hard and pay taxes, in pursuit of the American Dream. CAMP/HEP and TRIO serve these populations with targeted support including one-on-one counseling to ensure at-risk students stay in school, and financial aid assistance to ensure high school students graduate and attend college. I request no less than FY17 funding levels for these critical programs.

I am a strong supporter of student loan forgiveness for those who choose public service and urge the Committee to strengthen and expand those public service programs under the jurisdiction of this Committee. Many young people are consumed by an eagerness to serve and affect change, but feel burdened by the cost of their own education. My own family's American Dream was achieved through public service. I am here today because of my family's commitment to helping others. I am honored to continue this legacy and hope to inspire future generations to public service.

As Members of Congress, we strive to improve the well-being of our constituents and country. Education is the incubator of American innovation, prosperity, and economic equality and builds the foundation of success for future generations. All of the programs I've referenced are crucial to my district and help children and families achieve their own success and enrich our community as a whole. Thank you for the opportunity to advocate on behalf of these programs.