

Trump administration's 2019 budget ends eight decades of bipartisan presidential support for service programs

The following was submitted by Crystal Noles with the Butler County Department on Aging:

Washington, DC (Feb. 12, 2018) - The budget proposed last week by President Donald Trump would end our nation's 80-year investment in national service, leaving our veterans and their families underserved and our schools understaffed. The White House's budget for fiscal year 2019 would provide a small amount of funding to support the shutdown of the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that administers national service programs, including Foster Grandparents and RSVP, setting the agency up for assumed elimination the following year.

If unchecked, the move would devastate the work of thousands of non-profit community and faith-based groups like Catholic Charities, Habitat for Humanity and the American Red Cross who partner with CNCS.

Last year, the administration made the same recommendation but legislative champions from both parties, including Sena-

tors Roy Blunt and Patty Murray and Representatives Tom Cole and Rosa DeLauro, rejected that proposal and drafted legislation that would sustain funding for Senior Corps and all National Service Programs for another year.

"Once again, the cost-effective transformative work of national service programs stands at risk," said AnnMaura Connolly, President of Voices for National Service. "If adopted, this budget would serve as a death knell for Senior Corps. It would end our nation's longstanding investment in national service, taking away vital services from the Americans and communities that need them most."

"Fortunately, Congress, which is ultimately responsible for funding the government, has consistently demonstrated a strong, bipartisan commitment to national service, even as recently as this month."

"Eliminating funding National Service isn't a win for small government or the taxpayer, because every dollar invested in national service yields nearly four in return for society. Instead, this plan

would mark a loss of the patriotic service of the more than 80,000 young Americans and the 270,000 seniors who serve their nation and communities each year through these programs.

"Without this funding, thousands of non-profit, faith-based, and community organizations, including the YMCA, Boys and Girls Clubs of America, City Year, and Teach For America, would be gutted and unable to fully execute their missions.

"As we make the case for strong funding in fiscal year 2019, we will continue to count on bipartisan congressional leadership and the thousands of national service supporters who will join the fight to ensure that National Service can continue to provide critically needed service to their communities."

Background on the Corporation for National and Community Service

The Corporation for National and Community Service's (CNCS) FY 2017 budget of \$1.03 billion makes up less than .03 percent of the federal budget. CNCS, which leverages more than \$1.26 billion in additional resources from the private

sector, foundations, and local agencies, is helping organizations across the country work in creative ways to tackle our most persistent and costly challenges. A study by economists at Columbia University found that for every dollar invested in national service, there is a \$3.95 return to society in terms of higher earnings, increased output, and other community benefits.

National service is tremendously popular. A poll in nine presidential battleground states found that 83 percent of registered voters, including 78 percent of Republicans, support increased or maintained federal investment in national service.

If you would like more information on how you can help make your voice heard in support of national service and RSVP and the Foster Grandparent Program, please contact Melody Gault at 316-775-0500.

For more information on this and other activities of interest to seniors, contact the Butler County Department on Aging at 775-0500.