



May 7, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
Chairman, Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Service, Education, and Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Blunt,

As leaders in cities in Missouri, we are writing to thank you for being a champion for our national service programs. Your support for the Corporation for National and Community Service (CNCS), the federal agency that administers AmeriCorps and Senior Corps in partnership with the Missouri Community Service Commission, allows thousands of volunteers across Missouri serve their communities and meet local needs. We are proud that our home state U.S. Senator is a Voices for National Service "Congressional Service Award" winner.

As you saw first-hand last week during your tour of the Ewing Marion Kauffman School in Kansas City, programs like *AmeriCorps City Year Kansas City* enable Americans to help solve the problems facing their communities, including the following: students not performing at grade level in English, reading, science, or mathematics; blighted neighborhoods; homelessness; and unemployment. Our national service programs allow citizens to serve for a significant period of time, helping to ensure their neighbors' needs are met in a cost-effective way. Working hand-in-hand with thousands of local partners, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps engage more than 325,000 Americans in results-driven service each year. These dedicated national service members recruit and manage more than three million additional volunteers who help to create jobs, support veterans and military families, deliver disaster relief, prepare a better-trained workforce, promote health, strengthen local economies, lessen dependence on government, and make neighborhoods safer.

In our state, 4,770 Missourians of all ages and backgrounds completed AmeriCorps and Senior Corps service activities between April 14, 2017 and April 13, 2018 that helped meet local needs, strengthen communities and increase civic engagement through national service. Take for example, the AmeriCorps St. Louis Emergency Response Team. Its AmeriCorps members serve in teams that have prepared for and respond to disasters across Missouri and the nation. Most recently, they deployed AmeriCorps members and staff to Orlando, Florida, in response to Hurricane Irma, to San Juan, Puerto to support the response and recovery of Hurricane Maria, and, last February, to the small town of Malden, Missouri, after a tornado destroyed 10 homes and badly damaged 13 more. The team

conducted damage assessments, provided homeowner assistance, and led volunteer and donation management operations. Each year, approximately 1,000 AmeriCorps members and 4,000 Senior Corps volunteers serve at nearly 1,000 sites across the state.

American voters overwhelmingly support the federal investment in CNCS. A poll conducted by TargetPoint Consulting shows that 83 percent of voters want Congress to maintain or increase funding for national service programs. Voters believe that national service helps to prepare young people for the workforce, build stronger neighborhoods and communities, and restore important values of patriotism and civic duty to young people.

CNCS is also a smart public investment. The federal appropriation for CNCS accounts for a mere .03 percent of the federal budget overall, but this modest investment delivers significant returns. Research by economists at Columbia University demonstrates that every dollar invested in national service generates returns to society of nearly four dollars in terms of higher wages, increased output, and community-wide benefits. And in 2015, CNCS grantees raised \$1.26 billion in outside resources from private businesses, foundations, and other sources – an amount exceeding the federal appropriation. This local match strengthens community impact and increases the return on the taxpayer dollar.

Despite the overwhelming public support and a clear return on investment, the White House fiscal year 2019 budget blueprint once again proposes to eliminate CNCS, AmeriCorps and Senior Corps. We know the current budgetary climate requires tough decisions regarding federal spending, but if enacted, the Administration’s recommendation will have a detrimental effect on our Missouri communities. At a time when cities face many challenges, we urge you and your colleagues to continue your efforts to protect funding for CNCS – an investment that will strengthen our communities, our people, and our nation.

Thank you for your leadership and support in protecting our vital national service programs.

Sincerely,

Mayor Brian Treece
City of Columbia

Mayor Larry Henderson
City of Eldon

Mayor James Knowles III
City of Ferguson

Mayor James R. Hark
City of Hannibal

Mayor Eileen Weir
City of Independence

Mayor Carrie Tergin
Jefferson City

Mayor Gary Shaw
City of Joplin

Mayor Sylvester “Sly” James, Jr.
Kansas City

Mayor Jerry Mills
City of Kirksville

Mayor Denton Kooyman
City of Malden

Mayor Susan McVey
City of Poplar Bluff

Mayor Louis J. Magdits IV
City of Rolla

Mayor Ken McClure
City of Springfield

Mayor Lyda Krewson
City of St. Louis

Mayor Luge Hardman
City of Waynesville

Mayor Sally Faith
City of St. Charles

Mayor George A. Lauritson
City of St. Robert