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FY 2008: Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations Subcommittee Markup

WASHINGTON – Today the House Appropriations Committee subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services and Education considered the Chairman’s Mark of the fiscal year 2008 appropriations bill.

“You cannot disinvest in the country's future without creating the kind of future that no one wants,” said Dave Obey (D-WI), Chairman of the Subcommittee. “The strength of our country is not just our national security strength. It is what we have here at home. We are most secure when we have strong families. Families are strong when they have access to a decent education, quality healthcare, when they can go to jobs where they are safe, when they know that when they retire they will be financially secure. These are the programs that do that.”

This bill represents those values by investing in:

Department of Labor, \$11.9 billion, \$209.2 million (1.8%) above 2007 including:

- **Worker Training and Worker Protection:** \$209 million (1.8 %) above 2007 for employment, training, and worker protection programs including: Title V senior employment program, State unemployment insurance operations and the Employment Service, Job Corps, and worker protection programs.

Department of Health and Human Services, \$68.2 billion, \$4.1 billion (6.5 %) above 2007 including:

- **National Institutes of Health (NIH):** \$750 million (2.6%) above 2007 to increase the number of new and competing research grants by approximately 545 over last year; lift a two-year freeze on the average cost of new research grants; help train the next generation of researchers; and provide \$110.9 million for the National Children's Study and \$300 million for the global AIDS fund.
- **Pandemic Flu:** \$1.1 billion, \$1.0 billion above 2007, to help the nation prepare for and respond to an influenza pandemic.
- **Health Care Access:** \$6.953 for HRSA, \$537 million above 2007 for the agency primarily tasked with improving healthcare access.

Department of Education, \$61.7 billion, \$4.2 billion (7.4 %) above 2007, including:

- **Education, Pell Grants:** \$2.0 billion (14.6 %) above 2007, the largest single increase in the bill. This will raise the maximum Pell grant by \$390 to \$4,700, benefiting over 5.5 million students without reducing or eliminating other student financial assistance programs, as the Administration proposed.
- **No Child Left Behind (NCLB):** \$2.0 billion (8.4%) above 2007, including \$1.9 billion more for Title I grants to schools, benefiting nearly 55,000 Title I schools and fully funding reading and math instruction for an additional 161,000 low-income students, and significant increases for teacher quality programs and after-school centers.
- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) Part B grants:** \$174.5 million (1.6 %) above 2007 to stop a two-year decline in the Federal contribution toward the rising costs of special education for 6.9 million children with disabilities.

Low-Income Home Energy Assistance: \$500.8 million (23.2%) above 2007 level to support critical energy assistance to approximately 1 million more low-income seniors and families than last year.

Community Services Block Grant: \$660.4 million, \$30 million (4.8%) above 2007, to enable States to expand critical services, such as housing, home weatherization, parenting education, adult literacy classes, and emergency food assistance.

Child Care and Head Start: \$75 million (3.6 %) above 2007 for the **Child Care Block Grant** and \$75 million (1.4%) above 2007 for **Head Start**; and \$5.0 million for **new child care centers at Job Corps sites**. The increases in the Child Care Block Grant will expand Federally-funded quality child care to an additional 15,000 vulnerable families.

Social Security Administration: \$9.7 billion, \$401 million (4.3%) above 2007 to improve processing times for initial disability claims and hearings, which have increased in recent years and to help reduce the backlog of disability cases. SSA provides monthly cash benefits to nearly 55 million Americans each year.

Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB): \$420 million for fiscal year 2010 as an advance appropriation - \$20 million above what was provided for fiscal year 2009, to support public broadcasting activities in 1,150 locally-owned television and radio stations across the country.

“These are the programs that invest in our families' strength and the strength of our nation,” Obey concluded.

The bill includes \$1.1 billion in program cuts and consolidations with a significant cut to the Reading First program (-\$629 million) which the Administration used in its own

version of “earmarking,” steering billions of dollars to favored publishers and individuals.

The Labor-Health and Human Services-Education and Related Agencies bill provides \$151.548 billion for fiscal year 2008, which is \$6.9 billion (4.8%) above 2007. (\$153.706 billion if you include advanced appropriations)

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