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NASW says President Trump's proposed budget would harm well-being of all Americans
Association analyzes budget's impact on housing, feeding programs, environment, other programs

WASHINGTON, D.C. — President Trump's newly released a FY 2018 budget that would greatly harm a wide and diverse range of America's most vulnerable citizens. Most of those negatively impacted by the 2018 budget proposal are those who have already been excluded from the growth in jobs and improvements in our economy since the Recession of 2008.

The **National Association of Social Workers (NASW)** is deeply disappointed with a budget that clearly reflects a disregard for maintaining the social safety net and strengthening the fabric of our nation's health and environment.



Perhaps one of the most perplexing non-defense program cuts for the FY 2018 budget is *Meals on Wheels* which has provided nutrition services for home-bound low-income seniors at the state level- since 1954. Nationally **Meals on Wheels** (comprised of 5,000, local, community-based programs), receives 35 percent of its total funding from the federal *Older Americans Act*, Administration for Community Living and Community Development Block Grant. The proposed cuts would have a harsh impact on nutrition programs for the elderly across the country; putting Meals on Wheels deliveries at risk for millions of seniors.

Additional safety net programs targeted to lose significant funding include:

Emergency Food and Shelter Board Program

The Emergency Food and Shelter Board Program (EFSP) serves hungry and homeless or imminently-at-risk for homelessness people nationwide. The federal government awards states and local government funds to offer emergency food and shelter. In FY 2016, EFSP received federal funding from FEMA in the amount of \$123 million. Since established in 1983 the EFSP partnership has: distributed more than \$3.6 billion; allocated funds to over 2,500 jurisdictions; Funded more than 14,000 Local Recipient Organizations (LROs); served over 2.3 billion meals; provided over 254.7 million nights of shelter; made over 4.7 million rent/mortgage payments and; made over 6.8 million utility payments. Under the Trump FY 2018 budget, EFSP will be eliminated leaving the nation's most desperately needy citizens without this essential daily living service. The proposed cuts would have devastating impact on disadvantaged families across the country. Some may have to choose between paying for heat or food.

Legal Services Corporation

The Legal Services Corporation (LSC) was budgeted at \$352 million to cover legal costs on matters involving freeing seniors from fraud, providing legal aid in underserved rural areas, protecting victims of domestic violence, helping disaster survivors, securing housing for veterans and civil asset forfeiture. There are no national data available; however, many judges nationally report a significant increase in the number of litigants in civil cases who show up in court without legal representation (especially in foreclosure, domestic relations, and consumer disputes). There are data that suggest that more than 80 percent of litigants appear without lawyers on cases as important as evictions, mortgage foreclosures, child custody and child support proceedings, and debt collection cases in state courts. Despite the demonstrated need for this legal aid, the Trump Administration's 2018 budget will eliminate LSC. This proposed cut threatens to deny legal aid to low income families. Our democracy can't afford cuts to legal aid services.

Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring

Over the past three fiscal years, the Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) Hiring Program has provided an average of \$129 million in funding per year. In FY 2016, additional consideration was given to COPS hiring grant applications that focused on employing veterans, preventing homicide and gun violence, building community trust, homeland security, and the prevention of human trafficking. The COPS Hiring Program will likely be reduced by \$31.9 million. An immediate impact to this cut is not only reducing hiring officers, but it also indicates a move away from the enlightened community oriented policing model that led to improved police and community relations- especially in communities of color. These proposed cuts threatens the safety and prosperity of communities across the country, and the worst impacts would be felt in small towns and rural communities.

Job Training

The Trump Budget would cut job training and employment service programs at the Department of Labor by 35 percent. That would result in a loss of 140,000 training slots and an estimated 5-7 million individuals losing access to employment services. Additionally, the combined funding for Workforce Investment Act (WIOA), Title I training grants and ES formula grants is about \$3.4 billion, which amounts to **as much as a 50 percent cut** to these critical programs. These cuts, would devastate state and local workforce systems and would severely limit the ability of job seekers and businesses to get the necessary skills to compete in today's economy. These programs benefit low-skill, low-income populations that have been left behind by generational poverty and changes in the economy. It should be noted that residents living in rural regions will be greatly impacted by the reductions in the WIOA budget. For example, this proposed cut would eliminate essential programs that create minimum wage jobs for low income unemployed older adults at non-profit agencies and government agencies.

Family Planning (Title X)

Title X-which is a main source of funding for **Planned Parenthood** which serves more than four million low-income women and men every year. Two-thirds of Title X patients have incomes below the federal poverty level, and 60 percent of women who receive health care services from a Title X-funded clinic consider it their primary provider. Trump's 2018 budget does not specify a funding level for Title X. However, it is widely known that Planned Parenthood has long been a target of anti-abortion activist for defunding. Therefore, dramatic cuts in this \$286 million program would lead to the elimination of Planned Parenthood as a viable provider of comprehensive health care to low-income women. Cutting Title X family Planning hurts women's reproductive health; essentially, the cuts would limit access to family planning services and force clinics to cut back on staff and hours.

Before-School and After-School Programs

President Trump's budget cuts the Department of Education (DOE) by 13 percent. The DOE budget reductions will eliminate the after-school education *21st Century Community Learning Center (CCLC)* program that helps school districts, churches and nonprofit groups serve more than 1.6 million children nationwide. This program had demonstrated success and has enjoyed bipartisan support. The 13 percent cut in the proposed 2018 DOE budget eliminates billions for teacher training and would scale back or end several programs that help low-income students prepare and pay for college. Though these quality programs will be lost, President Trump seeks to shift **\$4.1 billion** into charter schools, private-school vouchers. Ultimately, this proposed budget cut would eliminate millions of dollars to school districts across the country, causing reduction and closure of many successful programs.

Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) is not often seen in the context of safety-net programs. However, we only need to recall the Flint, Michigan water crisis to be reminded the degree to which low-income ethnic minority populations depend on EPA regulations. President Trump's budget essentially guts the EPA. The proposed 2018 budget cuts EPA by \$2.6 Billion or 31 percent and would eliminate more than 50 programs and reduce the workforce by 3,200 employees. More concerning is the fact that resources for enforcement against polluters, is cut by \$129 million or 24 percent. The proposed cut would eliminate millions of dollars toward clean up of abandoned and light contaminated real property sites and toxic waste. This has environmental implications and health significance.

Community Development Block Grants

Community Development Block Grants (CDBG) are important sources of funds- from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HUD)- used by cities, counties, and states to meet the needs of moderate and low income residents. The CDBG formula grant was funded at \$3 billion in 2016. CDBG funds were used to rehabilitate housing, improve water mains and sewers, improve streets and sidewalks, and provide public services like senior and youth programs. CDBG grantees created or retained 17,545 jobs, directly assisted 73,757 households, and expanded access to public services and amenities for 11.5 million people. By completely ending this major housing safety-net program, President Trump would eliminate **a 42-year-old program** that had bipartisan support and proven effectiveness. The proposed cut would eliminate funding that assists struggling veterans, individuals, and families stay in their home.

HOME Investment Partnerships

HUD's HOME Investment Partnerships Program stands to be eliminated in 2018. HOME is the largest federal block grant for producing affordable housing for low-income families. Existing HOME funds will provide approximately 16,000 units of affordable housing; 15,000 units of newly constructed and rehabilitated affordable rental units; 7,500 units of owner-occupied rehabilitation for low-income homeowners; 8,800 low-income households with tenant-based rental assistance; and 500 homeownership units with Self-help Homeownership Opportunity Program (SHOP) funds. Given the paucity of affordable housing -spurred by ever rising rents- ending the HOME program will greatly exacerbate the national housing crisis. The proposed cut would impact housing programs that help vulnerable Americans afford a home. For example, rural communities' fight for more fair and affordable housing would suffer major setbacks.

Public Housing Capital Fund

The Public Housing Capital Fund is the principal source of federal funds to preserve public housing and promote opportunity for the more than 2.6 million residents for whom it provides a safe, decent, affordable housing. Public

Housing Capital Fund would be cut by 68 percent to \$600 million. The Capital Fund awards formula-driven grants to over 3,100 public housing authorities. What makes this reduction untenable is that more than half of the beneficiaries of projects funded by the Public Housing Capital Fund are fixed-income seniors or people with disabilities as heads of household. The proposed budget cut would eliminate millions of dollars to HUD to decrease waitlists for safe, stable housing for children and families. This means that some families will be unable to find an affordable place to rent or buy with additional families constantly under threat of foreclosure or eviction.

Low Income Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)

In Fiscal Year 2014, the most recent year for which data is available, the Low- Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) -which is administered by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) - aided with home heating and cooling to 6.8 million low-income households. The Trump 2018 budget [will eliminate](#) LIHEAP funding. Ending this program would impact as many as 6.8 million low-income households. LIHEAP is especially essential for low-income individuals and families living in rural and urban areas located in states that experience severely cold winters. The proposed cut would have a grave impact on the overall well-being of children, individuals and families. They would be denied access to a vital resource which could have a health and safety impact.

National Institute of Health (NIH)

The fate of promising research on curing cancers, preventing heart disease, and better understanding how reverse cognitive disorders has become questionable in the Administration's 2018 budget. The budget proposes to [cut \\$5.8 billion from NIH](#) in FY 2018. That represents close to a 20% decrease from its 2017 spending on biomedical research. The proposed budget cut has a grave impact on the overall well-being of Americans, weakening the public health preparedness and response.

What Happens Next?

This budget harms the safety, housing, education, health and economic well-being of all Americans. It is just the beginning of negotiations and will likely undergo modifications before Congress passes it. But the implications of his budget give the nation a first impression of the President's vision of his domestic priorities. Based on what we see in his proposed budget, the vision for low and middle income Americans is woefully limited.

When his position on repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act is paired with his 2018 budget, we are left to conclude that the Trump Administration's domestic priorities are heavily weighted to the 1 percent of Americans who already benefit from the largest [income disparities](#) in the United States since the 1970s.

The vocal Congressional opposition – from Democrats and Republicans- to the Trump budget priorities is perhaps an opportunity to reach a budget compromise that restores critical safety-net, medical research, and environmental protection funding. Until that happens, NASW will continue to press lawmakers to re-affirm America's commitment to the social safety-net and to protecting the health and welfare of its citizens.

Resources

[Center for Budget and Policy Priorities](#)

[Coalition on Human Needs](#)

[NDD United – Budget Priorities Coalition](#)

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The [National Association of Social Workers](#) (NASW), in Washington, DC, is the largest membership organization of professional social workers with 120,000 members. It promotes, develops, and protects the practice of social work and social workers. NASW also seeks to enhance the well-being of individuals, families, and communities through its advocacy.