



February 23, 2011

U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the undersigned members of the National Alliance of Pupil Services Organizations (NAPSO) whose more than a million members daily help the country's 90 million children to be successful in school, we urge you to oppose devastating cuts to public education, healthcare and other critical safety net programs for children and families. This will not fix the nation's deficit problem.

Proposals to disproportionately slash discretionary spending, or to impose statutory spending caps or balanced budget amendments, would result in debilitating cuts, especially to public education. This, in turn, would undermine the nation's fragile economic recovery, military readiness, and our international competitiveness.

Instead, we urge you and your colleagues to adopt a balanced, prudent approach to getting the Nation's fiscal house in order. This should include a robust, equitable package of government reforms; revenue increases; and targeted cuts that spare education and other crucial programs which protect the most vulnerable among us. For instance, the proposed unprecedented cuts in special education funds would not only affect children and youth with disabilities, but also create layoffs for specialized instructional support personnel in schools. Without these critical personnel, American children will no longer be able to access their right to a free and appropriate public education.

NAPSO organizations represent school counselors, school nurses, psychologists, school psychologists, social workers and school social workers; occupational therapists, physical therapists, art therapists, dance/movement therapists, and music therapists; speech-language pathologists and audiologists. In addition, we are joined in the coalition by the major national organizations representing general and special education teachers and pupil services administrators. Our coalition's members see the link between education and prosperity every day in schools and communities across the country through interdisciplinary practice and collaboration. We provide and support a variety of school-based prevention and intervention services to assist students in becoming effective learners and productive citizens.

We appreciate your serious consideration for maintaining education and health related funding for children and families. Should you need further information or clarification, please feel free to contact Myrna Mandlawitz (mandlawitz@verizon.net, 202-686-1637), Dominic Holt (dholt@counseling.org, 703-823-9800, Ext. 242); or Stacy Skalski (sskalski@naspweb.org, 301-657-0270).

Sincerely,