



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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BUILDING BRIGHT FUTURES ASKS CONGRESS TO KEEP CUTS AWAY FROM KIDS

Omaha, Neb. (Feb. 16, 2011) – Building Bright Futures sent a letter today to Nebraska’s Congressional delegation expressing concern about the detrimental impact of the proposed federal budget cuts to the organization’s efforts to improve academic achievement and reduce the drop-out rate. HR 1 cuts \$100 billion from domestic discretionary spending, including deep cuts to the funding of Head Start, child care, special education, higher education, K-12 education, school-based health centers, and many other programs that families and children need to be successful.

“HR 1 is the wrong direction for Nebraska’s working families and children,” said John Cavanaugh, Executive Director of Building Bright Futures. “We ask our representatives to vote in opposition to HR 1 because it moves us backwards in closing the achievement gap, in preparing the next workforce, and in helping families get and keep a job.”

According to Cavanaugh, “This bill means that hundreds of Nebraska’s young children will not have access to quality early education through Head Start, Nebraska schools will not have the resources they need to meet the Special Education needs of our kids, and low-income students will get less support to attend college.

Building Bright Futures is an Omaha-based nonprofit organization committed to improving academic performance, raising graduation rates, increasing civic and community responsibility and ensuring that all students are prepared for post-secondary education.

NOTE: Cavanaugh letter attached below

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February 16, 2011

The Honorable Lee Terry
2331 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Terry,

Building Bright Futures is committed to a comprehensive and community-wide effort to significantly reduce multigenerational poverty by improving academic success outcomes for all students and putting all students on a pathway to success. It is our assessment that the proposed cut in HR 1 would be a significant set-back in this effort.

As our great nation continues to recover from trying economic times, Congress must ensure that our country's most at-risk children enter school ready to learn and are prepared for success throughout life. As you consider the budget deficit and sustainable investments for the betterment of our future, we urge you to oppose HR 1 because of its potential to wipe out the opportunity to help prevent the achievement gap and produce a generation of economic gains for all Americans. HR 1 cuts \$100 billion from domestic discretionary spending – one of the smallest areas of total federal spending - cuts to the funding of Head Start, child care, special education, higher education, K-12 education, school based health centers, and many other programs that families and children need to be successful.

We ask that you oppose HR 1 based on the following cuts it proposes:

- \$1 billion from Head Start – This would mean nationwide 218,000 children would be removed from programs – 879 in Nebraska - and would close 16,000 nationwide classrooms, laying off 55,000 teachers, teacher assistants, and related staff
- \$693 million from Title I for schools – Title 1 programs in Nebraska would be cut by 6%
- \$557 million from Part B special education – Reduces special education in Nebraska by about \$3.5 million
- \$694 million from Pell Grants for low-income students – Reduces that average Pell Grant award in Nebraska by over 16 percent
- \$39 million from child care - 150,000 children nationwide would lose child care subsidies
- \$747 million from WIC nutrition assistance
- \$210 million from Title V Maternal and Child Block Grants

- \$327 million from Title X Family Planning Grants
- \$1.3 billion from Community Health Centers

HR 1 is the wrong direction for Nebraska's working families and children. We ask for your vote in opposition to HR 1 because it moves us backwards in closing the achievement gap, in preparing the next workforce, and in helping families get and keep a job.

Sincerely,

John Cavanaugh
Executive Director