

CONGRESS:

Moms Want You To Make Good Choices For Our Families!

Despite the fact that Immigration & Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs & Border Protection (CBP) separated thousands of children from their parents at the border, and we still do not know the exact number of these separations because these agencies did not bother to document which children belong to which parents at the time of separation, President Trump has introduced a FY2021 budget that would increase funding for ICE and CBP to over \$29 billion.¹ Congress must hold these agencies accountable for those family separations and for the continuing cruel mass incarceration of immigrant children and families by cutting funding for the most inhumane elements of the Trump Administration's immigration policy, starting with cutting \$5.7 billion for ICE detention and removal operations,² and \$5.8 billion for a wall at the southern border with Mexico.^{3,4}

That's at least \$11.5 billion of our tax dollars that could be used to lift up our children and communities instead of tearing families apart. America's families believe that we all do better when everyone has the opportunity to succeed, which means investing in strong families and communities by using tax dollars to support critical education, housing, nutrition and health care programs.

Here are 5 ways Congress should invest \$11.5 billion in our families, rather than tearing families apart:



1. BOOST FEDERAL FUNDING TO PUBLIC K-12 SCHOOLS BY 70%

The primary source of federal aid to public schools is the Title I program that provides federal funding to schools that serve lower-income students. More than half of all public schools in the United States benefit from the program. In 2020, Title I grants to public schools will total \$16.3 billion.

An additional \$11.5 billion would boost this aid by more than 70%, and could make a huge difference to our schools and children's lives. U.S. schools are old, and many are desperately in need of updates, like expansion to accommodate growing enrollment, and energy retrofits to control spiking energy costs. A 70% funding boost wouldn't be enough to solve the problems, but in a world where citizens launch GoFundMe campaigns to raise \$75,000 for school heaters, it would be a great start.



2. PROVIDE HEALTHCARE THROUGH MEDICAID FOR 2.74 MILLION PEOPLE

The number of uninsured Americans has plummeted since the Affordable Care Act, with nearly 19 million more non-elderly Americans insured than before (elderly Americans are eligible for Medicare). But, nearly 28 million Americans remained uninsured in 2018.

At the program's current costs, \$11.5 billion could provide Medicaid – cost-effective, quality insurance – for 2 million Americans.⁵ That's like giving free, quality health insurance to the entire state of New Mexico.



**28 MILLION AMERICANS
REMAIN UNINSURED
AT THE END OF 2018**



3. TRIPLE FUNDING FOR SUBSTANCE USE AND MENTAL HEALTH

With the United States facing a disturbing decline in life expectancy, experts have blamed both an opioid epidemic and a historically high suicide rate. Substance abuse and mental health should be near the top of the list for increased funding.

And yet the current budget for the main federal agency that handles both substance abuse and mental health, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), received just \$5.7 billion in federal funds in 2020.⁷ Adding \$11.5 billion to that could almost triple current funding.

67,367 PEOPLE IN THE U.S. DIED FROM DRUG OVERDOSES IN 2018⁸

THE FEDERAL AGENCY THAT HANDLES SUBSTANCE ABUSE ONLY RECEIVED \$5.7 BILLION IN FUNDING FOR 2020.



4. REBUILD PUERTO RICO'S DEVASTATED SCHOOLS – FOUR TIMES

Many areas under U.S. jurisdiction are still neglected and struggling to recover years after major disasters. Almost two years after the devastation of Hurricane Maria, Puerto Rico has been rocked by earthquakes that have further devastated infrastructure and interrupted daily life.

Badly damaged schools remained closed for weeks following the recent earthquakes. Providing \$11.5 billion would be enough to rebuild Puerto Rico's schools to be safer and more resilient to future disasters – four times over.⁹



ONLY 20% OF PUERTO RICO SCHOOLS RE-OPENED 3 WEEKS AFTER EARTHQUAKES

MORE THAN TWO YEARS AFTER HURRICAN MARIA, FUNDS ARE STILL NEEDED TO REBUILD HOMES, HOSPITALS, SCHOOLS, AND INFRASTRUCTURE



5. MULTIPLY FEDERAL SPENDING ON ENERGY EFFICIENCY AND RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 5

Climate change is real, and it's a crisis. And it's depressing that the United States budget for research and deployment of energy efficiency and renewable energy is a paltry \$2.8 billion.¹⁰ Adding \$11.5 billion to bring the total to \$14.2 billion is just a fraction of the massive investment we really need to achieve a zero-carbon grid fast enough to help slow climate change, but it would do much more to speed up the transition than our government is doing now. And it would be better than building a wall.

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[1] Department of Homeland Security FY 2021 Budget in Brief. <https://www.appropriations.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/FY2020%20Homeland%20Security%20Appropriations%20Act,%20Report%20116-125.pdf> [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. [4] "Pentagon transferring \$3.8 billion to border wall." <https://thehill.com/policy/defense/482974-pentagon-transfer-ring-38b-to-border-wall> [5] Kaiser Family Foundation. <https://www.kff.org/uninsured/issue-brief/key-facts-about-the-uninsured-population/>. [6] National Priorities Project, Kaiser Family Foundation. Based on average Medicaid cost per person. <https://www.kff.org/medicaid/state-indicator/medicaid-spend-ing-per-enrollee/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22asc%22%7D>. [7] Department of Health and Human Services 2021 Budget in Brief. <https://www.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/fy-2021-budget-in-brief.pdf> [8] CDC Brief January 2020. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db356.htm> [9] "Puerto Rico Opens Only 20% of Schools 3 Weeks After Strong Earthquake." <https://time.com/5773110/puerto-rico-schools-closed-earthquake/> [10] Office of Management and Budget Public Budget Database. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/omb/supplemental-materials/>