

CSLC Statement on the Detailed Presidential Budget 2018

On May 23, 2017, President Trump released the full version of the FY 2018 budget proposal, which includes \$500 million for the Charter Schools Program, a \$158 million increase over FY 2017 funding. Of the \$500 million, up to \$100 million is set aside for charter school facilities financing.

While the Charter School Lenders' Coalition is pleased to see the Administration's dedication to opening, expanding, and replicating high-quality public charter schools, we are disappointed to see a reduction in overall support for the Department of Education by more than 13% or \$10.6 billion, from the bipartisan, omnibus appropriations agreement for FY 2017. In particular, the reduction in formula-based funding for Title I grants by \$550 million and IDEA grants by \$112 million, compared to FY 2017 funding levels, is concerning. These programs are critical to both traditional public school and public charter school students alike. A reduction of this magnitude would be detrimental to all students who attend public schools.

The budget proposal also targets the community development industry. Most of the Coalition's members are Community Development Financial Institutions (CDFIs), who rely on funding from the CDFI Fund (the Fund) for their core programs. The budget slashes funding for the Fund from a record-high of \$248 million down to \$14 million for administration and expenses. Without financing from the Fund, CDFIs will be forced to make dramatic programmatic cuts, which will have far-reaching, negative consequences for the families and communities we serve.

Further, the proposal threatens to eliminate several key housing programs which directly affect community-based development projects, including charter schools. Some of those programs include the Community Development Block Grant Program, Choice Neighborhoods Initiative, and the HOME Investment Partnerships Program, each of which plays a part in developing new and rehabbing existing community projects.

The Coalition echoes the sentiments of the National Alliance for Public Charter Schools, along with other leading national educational organizations, and urges the Administration and Members of Congress to consider all the ways the federal budget impacts students in both traditional public schools and public charter schools. We must all work to make the right decisions when it comes to our students.