

Congress Must Prevent Sequestration From Setting Back School Reform

The Facts

- Legislation to extend the Fiscal Year 2013 Continuing Resolution will lock in cuts that took effect when Congress did not enact an alternative to sequestration before the February 2013 deadline.
- Under the full-year Continuing Resolution that has passed the House, and the one now under consideration in the Senate, all Department of Education discretionary programs except Pell Grants will be cut by approximately 5 percent compared to the FY 2012 levels.
- For Department of Education programs, this will mean a loss of some \$2.35 billion that supports the education of disadvantaged students (such as those attending high-poverty schools, students with disabilities, and English language learners) and efforts to turn around low-performing schools.
- The major programs that are the cornerstones of the federal effort to improve K-12 education will be particularly affected. Title I funding for high-poverty schools will be cut by some \$720 million and IDEA grants for the education of students with disabilities will lose some \$579 million compared to their FY 2012 funding levels.
- Sequestration will set back statewide efforts to fix failing schools. Under ESEA allocation rules, a portion of Title I funding is reserved to support statewide systems of support for low-performing schools. This reservation will be limited if the sequestration cuts go through unless the Congress takes action to ensure that the set-aside for statewide school improvement is still available.

What the Congress Must Do

- Spare education programs – especially the major education programs like Title I and IDEA that are essential to accomplish national goals – from the sequestration.
- If the sequestration is allowed to take effect for Title I, approve appropriations or ESEA reauthorization language that supports targeted statewide school improvement efforts.
- In the fiscal year 2014 appropriation, recoup funds lost because of the sequestration in FY 2013.

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