

Disappointing News Despite Great Work

12/20/2010

It has been a disappointing week as most of you know by now. You did an amazing job contacting your Senators about the importance of an omnibus appropriations bill with significant increases for child care, Head Start, and the Early Learning Challenge Fund.

However, through no fault of your great work, Senator Harry Reid, the Senate Majority Leader, pulled the omnibus bill from the floor early Thursday night because it did not have 60 votes to break a filibuster. One major reason given was the bill's earmarks. Ironically, many members had indicated that they might have voted for it because of the earmarks, but the Republican leadership sent its caucus a loud message that they must stick together and vote "No" on the omnibus.

Congress and the Administration are [now finalizing a continuing resolution \(CR\)](#) that will last until March 4 and that does not include the ARRA child care and Head Start/Early Head Start increases or the Challenge Fund.

The word from the incoming Congress is that deep cuts will be on the table. It is going to be one of the most challenging times we have all faced as advocates. We did an incredible job working together to move the ARRA child care and Head Start increases and the Challenge Fund through the budget and appropriations process this year. We will be tested in the months ahead and will need to work not just with our early childhood colleagues but with a broad Coalition of groups to stave off deep cuts in spending.

Please stay tuned and mark your calendar for an upcoming conference call on Thursday, January 13 at 3pm ET, to get the latest information and discuss what's next for early childhood in the new Congress. More details will be forthcoming.

Thank you again for making your members of Congress understand the importance of early learning. This is just a big bump in the road, but we will do all we can to smooth it over for the children and families who benefit from high-quality early learning experiences.