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While We Were Dreaming – President Trump Stole What We'll Need When We Wake Up

Deep cuts to domestic spending to fuel increases in defense expenditures make American dreams impossible to become realities

Washington, D.C. – Last night, President Donald Trump made his first address to a joint session of Congress that outlined his administration priorities, following the first insights into what we can expect from a Presidential budget request next month. In the closing arc of his speech, President Trump asked Congress to "think of the marvels we can achieve if we simply set free the dreams of the people," before highlighting biomedical research, space science, lifting Americans from welfare to work, safe streets and great public schools.

"While we were dreaming, the President stole what we'll need when we wake up," said NDD United co-chair Benjamin Corb following the President's remarks. "The reality is, every single area the President highlighted in his dramatic close are areas that rely on a robust investment from the federal government in non-defense discretionary spending, the very part of the budget President Trump is slashing by \$54 billion in order to pay for his military buildup."

Today, NDD United, a coalition of more than 2,000 federal, state and local organizations reliant on domestic spending from the federal government delivered to Congress a letter calling on Congress and the President to "work together to protect NDD programs and from further cuts and end sequestration." The letter continues, "Such sequestration relief must be equally balanced between nondefense and defense programs."

NDD United co-chair Emily Holubowich added, "Since the President wants to increase funding for such things as border security, homeland security, and veteran's health, all of which are within NDD, that will make cuts to biomedical research, education, environmental protection, workforce training, children's programs, and more that much worse."

The letter, signed by thousands of organizations, reminds Congress that NDD programs are essential to national security, have already been cut too much after years of austere budget policies, and have consequences. "These cuts are dragging down our economic recovery, hampering business growth and development, weakening public health preparedness and response, reducing resources for our nation's schools and colleges, compromising federal oversight and fraud recovery, hindering scientific discovery, eroding our infrastructure, and threatening our ability to address emergencies around the world. Simply put, these cuts are bad for the country and are not sustainable," the letter explains.

In 2013, NDD United published a report, "Faces of Austerity, How Budget Cuts Have Made Us Sicker, Poorer and Less Secure" highlighting example after example of how austere fiscal policies cutting domestic spending are eroding many of the programs Americans rely on for their own quality of life and well-being. Sheryl Cohen, NDD United co-chair reminds us, "If cuts of this magnitude were to be enacted, our commitment to education and the many other important programs supported by non-defense discretionary spending that the public widely supports would be severely harmed."

With the letter's delivery, NDD United hopes to highlight how the variety of programs supported by domestic spending are as important to America as a strong national defense. Final NDD United Founding Co-Chair Joel Packer said, "We are confident that Congress will reject these unprecedented cuts. We look forward to working on a bipartisan basis with supporters of these critical programs to protect these investments in our education, health, safety, and indeed, our future."

A copy of the letter can be found [here](#).

A copy of the *Face of Austerity Report* can be found [here](#).

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NDD (Non-Defense Discretionary) United is an alliance of thousands of national, state, and local organizations working to protect investments in core government functions that benefit all Americans.