



FY 2019 BUDGET COMMUNITY ACTION STATEMENT OF SUPPORT FOR CSBG

COMMUNITY ACTION

Community Action believes that our country can't thrive unless our communities and families do. The future of America depends on everyone in urban, suburban, and rural places doing well. Our communities are stronger when all people can realize their full potential and contribute to their local community.

At some point in their lives everyone needs a helping hand. Community Action, through its 1,000 plus local agencies, both private and public, is a trusted source of support for over 15 million people in more than 6 million families annually across America.

Community Action's local control and flexibility form a solid foundation for generating solutions to address the complex causes of poverty in local communities.

Community Action uses sophisticated management and accountability practices to integrate a wide array of federal, state, and private resources in the creation of healthy and vibrant communities that provide opportunities for individuals and families to succeed.

The Promise of Community Action

Community Action changes people's lives, embodies the spirit of hope, improves communities, and makes America a better place to live. We care about the entire community, and we are dedicated to helping people help themselves and each other.

ADMINISTRATION'S FY2019 BUDGET PROPOSAL

Community Action rejects the Administration's FY2019 budget proposal to eliminate funding for the Community Services Block Grant. We support funding at \$750 million.

COMMUNITY SERVICES BLOCK GRANT (CSBG)

The CSBG Act, the federal legislation governing Community Action Agencies (CAAs), requires states to work through the Community Action Network—the nationwide system of over 1,000 local CAAs—to connect families and individuals to opportunities to move from poverty to economic security. CAAs are trusted local organizations uniquely positioned to address the causes of poverty specific to their individual communities.

- *Through grants to states and local agencies, the CSBG Act defines, supports, and enforces the unique features of Community Action.* Local agencies must meet federal requirements to be formally designated as a Community Action Agency and receive CSBG funds. These requirements ensure that low-income individuals and others in the community have a voice in planning and oversight of local programs, that initiatives respond to locally identified needs, and that resources are coordinated and used

effectively. States use their portion of CSBG funds to monitor local agency performance and coordinate antipoverty resources statewide.

- *CSBG is the only dedicated funding source that supports core Community Action functions.* CAAs are highly successful at leveraging their small CSBG allotments to obtain a wide array of other public and private resources that address local causes and conditions of poverty. This success results from the agencies' formal designation as Community Action Agencies and from the extensive efforts of their staff and board members in conducting needs assessments, developing innovative strategies, coordinating with community partners, identifying public and private resources, and securing competitive grant funds. CSBG funds support these critical activities, along with fundamental agency operations and infrastructure.
- *CSBG provides flexible funds to support gap-filling activities that address unmet needs, innovative initiatives to combat poverty and promote self-sufficiency, and rapid response to urgent community needs.* CAAs identify causes and conditions of poverty that may not be addressed through an existing program or for which existing resources are not adequate. CSBG funds are used alone and in combination with other resources to support important antipoverty initiatives that would not otherwise be possible.

COMMUNITY ACTION AND OUR PARTNERS SUPPORTING A BRIGHT FUTURE FOR ALL AMERICANS

Community Action and its many partners believe future American progress depends on families constructing stable and strong foundations so everyone in the family—young children, teens, parents, and seniors alike—can reach their full potential. Providing supports that help stabilize a family creates hope and builds well-being. Opening to everyone the opportunity for education and training, the opportunity to work, and the opportunity to live in decency and dignity is both in America's best interest and a smart investment; it prevents the need for future services and contributes to stronger, more vibrant communities and economies.

We, the co-signing organizations below, support Community Action and call for funding the Community Services Block Grant at \$750 million for FY 2019.

List of Co-Signing Organizations

National Community Action Foundation

National Community Action Partnership