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## **National PTA Statement on FY2017 Appropriations Bill**

ALEXANDRIA, Va., (May 9, 2017)—President Trump signed a spending bill that funds federal programs and services through September 2017. The bill cuts overall funding for education by \$1 billion and does not include funding for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers (SFECs) program.

“National PTA is extremely disappointed that funding for education is reduced by an astounding \$1 billion and that the SFECs program is not funded in the bill,” said Laura Bay, president of National PTA. “Opportunity starts and ends with access to a great education. Federal investment in education and family engagement are critical to children and the nation’s long-term success.”

National PTA is disappointed that the bill cuts vital funding for public education by \$1 billion, including a \$200 million cut to teacher and principal professional development grants among many other education programs. However, the association is encouraged to see that an additional \$100 million is designated for Title I—which aids schools with high percentages of children from low-income families—as well as an additional \$90 million for special education grants through the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The association is also pleased that \$400 million has been designated for Student Support and Academic Enrichment Grants to ensure students receive well-rounded educational opportunities, learn in healthy and safe school environments and have opportunities to use technology in the classroom.

Funding for family engagement programs like SFECs is a top priority for National PTA, particularly as the Every Student Succeeds Act is being implemented. The SFECs program would provide states and districts with the capacity to support implementation and enhancement of meaningful family engagement policies and initiatives. It would also empower parents and families with the resources they need to ensure their children are provided the best opportunities to thrive and learn. Family engagement in education has demonstrated direct benefits to student achievement and school improvement.

“National PTA is encouraged by the increases for Title I and special education,” said Nathan R. Monell, CAE, National PTA executive director. “However, we are deeply concerned about the decrease in overall funding for education and the lack of funding for the SFECs program. National PTA remains committed to advocating to ensure Congress and the Administration adequately invest in public education and family engagement programs in fiscal year 2018. We must make every child’s potential a reality in order to improve our nation’s economic competitiveness.”

#### **About National PTA**

National PTA® comprises millions of families, students, teachers, administrators, and business and community leaders devoted to the educational success of children and the promotion of family engagement in schools. PTA is a registered 501(c)(3) nonprofit association that prides itself on being a powerful voice for all children, a relevant resource for families and communities, and a strong advocate for public education. Membership in PTA is open to anyone who wants to be involved and make a difference for the education, health, and welfare of children and youth.