

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

January 30, 2017

Ann Linehan  
Acting Director  
Office of Head Start  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
330 C Street, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Acting Director Linehan:

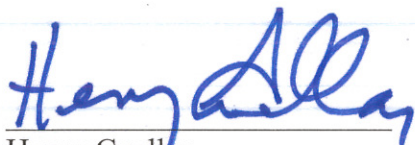
We write to you concerning Teaching and Mentoring Communities (TMC), a Head Start grantee, headquartered in Laredo, Texas. TMC is funded primarily through Federal and State government grants. The border community of Laredo, Texas has helped TMC grow from a mobile Migrant Head Start program into a national organization since its inception in 1971. We write to express our concerns with TMC's proposed 2017-2018 Migrant and Seasonal Head Start grant application.

It has come to our attention that TMC's 2017-2018 grant application includes a decrease in the number of children it serves, a reduced budget, and cuts to administrative staff, these reductions come at a time when Congress has increased the Head Start budget by over \$500 million, from FY2015 to FY2016. TMC's parent led policy council, has reached out to our offices and expressed serious concerns with the current application, stating the proposal does not include any discussion as to how TMC is addressing the chronic issue of the under-enrollment of children and how the proposed cuts will benefit the children and families it serves. As you are aware Head Start is directed to have significant parent involvement in the administration of their local Head Start programs; on their behalf we request a clarification from your office of these concerns.

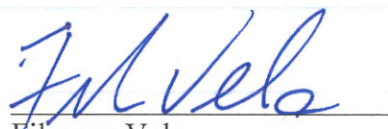
Additionally, TMC's governing board had attempted to use federal funds to relocate its national headquarters out of Laredo, Texas. As representatives of communities on the U.S-Mexico border, an economically distressed area, we find it concerning that a grantee would request to use federal funds to relocate its headquarters without just cause. We applaud the Head Start administration's decision to disallow that request. The objective of the Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program is to serve low-income children; moving TMC's headquarter out of an economically distressed area goes against the program's fundamental principle. TMC was founded and has prospered on the border; its headquarters should remain there.

Finally, we request you disallow any budget items in TMC's grant application calling for cuts to services provided to children and families as they are not aligned with the Head Start program's goals and request you clarify how the proposed administrative cuts are necessary and will benefit the program. TMC's application should address the issues of chronic under enrollment and included strategies to increase and improve services for children and families.

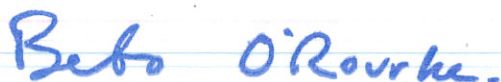
We thank you for your attention to this matter.



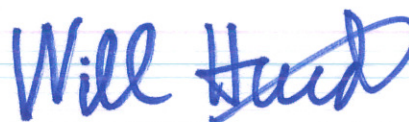
Henry Cuellar  
Member of Congress  
28<sup>th</sup> District of Texas



Filemon Vela  
Member of Congress  
34<sup>th</sup> District of Texas



Beto O'Rourke  
Member of Congress  
16<sup>th</sup> District of Texas



Will Hurd  
Member of Congress  
23<sup>rd</sup> District of Texas



Vicente Gonzalez  
Member of Congress  
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