

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

July 10, 2025

The Honorable Lori Chavez-DeRemer  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Labor  
200 Constitution Ave NW  
Washington, DC 20210

Dear Secretary Chavez-DeRemer:

We are extremely concerned about the Department of Labor's (DOL) withholding of funds for the Senior Community Service Employment Program (SCSEP). Since 1965, SCSEP has provided low-income, older adults with job-training and essential skills so they can continue contributing to their communities. As a result, seniors not only engage in community service, but also strengthen their own financial stability and improve their quality of life.

Congress appropriated \$405 million for SCSEP in Fiscal Year 2025. However, as of July 9, 2025, over \$300 million of those funds allotted for the 19 national SCSEP grantees have not been released by DOL. These organizations serve tens of thousands of low-income seniors who rely on their SCSEP wages to put food on the table, heat and cool their homes, and pay for their medications. While DOL has offered grantees a one-month no-cost extension on their programming, nearly half of grantees report not having enough funding to continue for a month. In our state of Vermont, over 50 seniors have been furloughed as a result of your decision to withhold funds. Not only are these seniors losing wages needed to pay their bills, but losing valuable training time that is impeding their ability to re-enter the workforce.

It is the mission of DOL "to foster, promote, and develop the welfare of the wage earners, job seekers, and retirees of the United States; improve working conditions; advance opportunities for profitable employment; and assure work-related benefits and rights." Your actions to withhold funding that Congress has appropriated for SCSEP is counter to this mission and your responsibility to the American people. Your department has a legal and moral obligation to release this funding and ensure no further harm is done to SCSEP grantees and the seniors they serve.

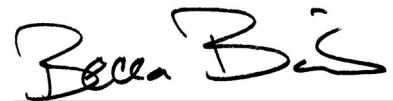
We urge you to immediately release SCSEP funds to the national grantees across the country. We look forward to speaking with you about this issue as soon as possible.

Sincerely,



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Bernard Sanders  
United States Senator



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Becca Balint  
Member of Congress



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Peter Welch  
United States Senator