



## **Rep. Cuellar Supports Colonias Communities and Farmworkers**

*Secured Critically Needed Funding and Provisions*

### **Fiscal Year 2023 Appropriations**

#### ***FY23 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* Migrant and Seasonal Head Start.—The Committee is concerned by reports that an increasing number of farmworker families with young children are finding it difficult to qualify for Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) services despite regulatory flexibilities available to the program in the Head Start Act. The Committee is concerned that 2019 enrollment data indicates that MSHS programs may not be utilizing these flexibilities to the maximum extent allowable and urges the Secretary to continue to work with individual MSHS programs to maximize flexibilities related to income eligibility where under-enrollment is an issue. Within 120 days of enactment of this Act, the Committee directs OHS to provide a comprehensive list of the MSHS programs reporting under-enrollment in fiscal years 2021 and 2022 and to include program specific data on the percent of enrollees determined eligible by the allowable flexibilities (as outlined in the Report to Congress on Head Act Eligibility, April 2022), so that the Committee can better understand the eligibility issues facing MSHS programs and can continue to discuss any further actions that may be necessary.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$52,123,000 for High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) (Special Programs for Migrant Students). (Increase of \$4,000,000 from FY22: \$48,123,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$375,626,000 for State Agency Program for Migrant Education. (Level from FY22)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$97,396,000 for National Farmworkers Jobs Program. (Increase of \$2,000,000 from FY22: \$95,396,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$352,407,000 for Rural Health Programs. (Increase of \$21,345,000 from FY22)

#### ***FY23 Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Strong working conditions for our farmworkers are critical to the resiliency of the food and agricultural supply chain. The Committee is supportive of USDA’s efforts to improve working conditions for farmworkers,

including for women farmworkers who are vulnerable to sexual assault and exploitation in the workplace. The Committee urges the Department to expand partnerships with appropriate entities to ensure the working conditions and challenges faced by women farmworkers are adequately investigated and incorporated into USDA's pilots and programs. The Committee requests the Department to conduct a study to 1) understand the work conditions and challenges, such as sexual assault, faced by women farmworkers; and 2) to develop recommendations on how the Department can promote improvements through its programs and pilots.”

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$20,000,000 for farm labor housing, to remain available until expended; \$4,084,000 for direct farm labor housing loans and \$10,000,000 domestic farm labor housing grants and contracts.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$70,000,000 for Grants for Colonias, and Alaskan and Hawaiian Native Villages under Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program Account. (Level funding from FY22)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language*: Farm Labor Housing.—The Committee encourages USDA to explore opportunities to leverage its resources including its Food and Nutrition Programs, Community Facilities Programs, Housing Preservation Grants, and other programs, and to create partnerships with the Department of Labor's Farmworker Housing outreach and technical assistance program, Health Resources and Services Administration's Health Center Program, and the Administration for Children and Families Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program, to coordinate and align resources to address the housing, nutrition and healthcare needs of this vulnerable population of essential workers who play a critical role in America's food security. The Committee further encourages USDA to explore including service coordinators as an allowable expenditure for farm labor housing projects.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language*: Circuit Rider Program.—The Committee encourages the Department to ensure critically needed assistance under the Circuit Rider Program is appropriately targeted to communities in persistent poverty counties, including persistent poverty communities in border colonias regions.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language*: Colonias and Farmworker Communities.—The Committee recognizes the challenges facing colonias and farmworker communities and urges the Department to work with other Federal agencies to identify best practices and other ways to further assist colonias communities and farmworkers. The Committee encourages USDA to explore strategies to adopt and address the unique participation challenges faced by rural communities in the border region colonias communities. Further, the Committee encourages the Secretary to support these communities with funds appropriated for the Rural Partnership Network. The Committee requests a briefing on these efforts within 90 days following enactment.

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* Colonias Definition. – The Committee urges the Department to reconsider the definition of colonias, so that colonias communities with higher population density, but low incomes and substandard living conditions may be eligible for certain USDA programs that require a rural designation.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* Border Communities.—The Committee is concerned that the water and wastewater needs of colonias communities that suffer from high rates of poverty along the southern border are not being adequately addressed. The Committee encourages USDA to support qualified non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or construction projects to help colonias communities with accessing USDA’s water and wastewater programs and services.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* Community Connect.—The Committee encourages USDA to collaborate with qualified nonprofit organizations, including community colleges, to provide technical assistance to communities in persistent poverty counties, including persistent poverty communities in border colonias region, to facilitate access to broadband services including Distance Learning and Telemedicine opportunities.

***FY23 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* Agricultural worker transportation.-The agreement encourages the FT A, through the national rural transportation assistance program, in coordination with the U.S. Department of Agriculture [USDA] rural housing service, to develop materials and best practices that can be disseminated to local governments, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation with the goal of identifying options to establish or expand affordable and reliable transit services for farmworkers, especially those residing in housing financed by the USDA.

***FY23 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$36,386,000 for US-Mexico Border EPA State and Tribal Assistance Grants under the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP). (Increase of \$4,386,000 from FY22: \$32,000,000)

**Fiscal Year 2022 Appropriations**

***FY22 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Migrant and Seasonal Head Start (MSHS) Eligibility Requirements.— The Committee remains concerned about how enrollment and eligibility requirements for the MSHS program may act as barriers for low-income farmworker families seeking MSHS services. The Committee reiterates the need for the report on the Impact of the Federal Poverty Guideline, as requested in House Report 116-

450, including the section examining how such requirements may be affecting MSHS. The Committee expects the OHS to brief the Committees on the findings and recommendations of that report as soon as practicable, but not later than 30 days after enactment of this Act, so that it can continue to discuss possible solutions to expand access to such families. In addition, the Committee is concerned that families applying for MSHS services may be deemed ineligible based on the disruption to the lives of agricultural workers as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. The Committee understands that several flexibilities exist with regard to how a farmworker can demonstrate eligibility for MSHS programs and directs OHS to issue guidance within 30 days of enactment of this Act on the flexibilities MSHS programs can offer farmworker families with regard to demonstrating income eligibility, or residency, if they were unable to migrate as a result of the pandemic.”

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Most Vulnerable Communities GAO Study.—The Committee directs GAO to conduct a study identifying whether Head Start meets the needs of the most vulnerable children and communities around the country, or whether flexibility could be given in order to allocate funds to communities, age groups, or families that are in greatest need around the country.”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* \$48,123,000 for High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). (Increase of \$2,000,000 from FY21: \$46,123,000)”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$375,626,000 for Program for Migrant Education (Same as FY21: \$375,626,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$95,396,000 for National Farmworkers Jobs Program (Increase of \$1,500,000 from FY21: \$93,896,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Bill Language:* \$95,396,000 for migrant and seasonal farmworker programs under section 167 of the WIOA, including \$88,283,000 for formula grants (of which not less than 70 percent shall be for employment and training services), 16 \$6,456,000 for migrant and seasonal housing (of which not less than 70 percent shall be for permanent housing), and \$657,000 for other discretionary purposes, which shall be available for the period April 1, 2022 through June 30, 21 2023.
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* \$85,975,000 for Rural Health Outreach (Increase of \$3,475,000 from FY21: \$82,500,000)

#### ***FY22 Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* \$28,000,000 for farm labor housing, to remain available until expended; \$2,831,000 for direct farm labor housing loans and \$10,000,000 domestic farm labor housing grants and contracts.” (\$2,831,000 Budget

Authority for \$18,000,000 loan level, level from FY 21 and \$10,000,000 for grants, level with FY 21: \$10,000,000)

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Farm Labor Housing.—The Committee encourages USDA to explore opportunities to leverage its resources including its Food and Nutrition Programs, Community Facilities Programs, Housing Preservation Grants, and other programs, and to create partnerships with the Department of Labor’s Farmworker Housing outreach and technical assistance program, Health Resources and Services Administration’s Health Center Program, and the Administration for Children and Families Migrant and Seasonal Head Start Program, to coordinate and align resources to address the housing, nutrition and healthcare needs of this vulnerable population of essential workers who play a critical role in America’s food security. The Committee further encourages USDA to explore including critically needed service coordinators as an allowable expenditure for farm labor housing projects. financed by the Department to facilitate needed coordination.”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Relending Program.—The Committee applauds the initial success of the Single Family Housing Direct relending loan program and urges the Department to expand the pilot to other states, particularly in the southwestern United States.”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Colonias and Farmworker Communities. – The Committee recognizes the challenges facing colonias and farmworker communities and urges the Department to explore establishing an “Office of Colonias and Farmworker Initiatives” and work with other Federal agencies to identify best practices and ways to further assist colonias communities and farmworkers.”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** *Report Language:* “Colonias Definition. – The Committee urges the Department to reconsider the definition of colonias, so that colonias communities with higher population density, but low incomes and substandard living conditions may be eligible for certain USDA programs that require a rural designation.” (House Report – pg. 61/Adopted)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]:** \$70,000,000 for Grants for Colonias, and Alaskan and Hawaiian Native Villages under Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program Account. (Increase of \$2,000,000 from FY21: \$68,000,000.)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Border Communities.—The Committee is concerned that the water and wastewater needs of colonias communities that suffer from high rates of poverty along the southern border are not being adequately addressed. The Committee encourages USDA to support qualified non-profit organizations to provide technical assistance and/or construction projects to help colonias communities with accessing USDA’s water and wastewater programs and services.”

### ***FY22 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* “Agricultural worker transportation.— The Committee is concerned about the provision of safe, reliable transportation to and from worksites for farmworkers, including farmworkers residing in housing financed by the Department of Agriculture (USDA). The Committee encourages FTA, through the national rural transit assistance program, in coordination with USDA’s rural housing service, to develop materials and best practices that can be disseminated to local government authorities, nonprofit organizations, and operators of public transportation with the goal of identifying options to establish or expand transit services for farmworkers.”
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: 2,000,000 for a border colonias rehab program.

### ***FY22 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]** *Report Language:* US-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Grant Program—The Committee recommends \$32,000,000 for drinking water and wastewater infrastructure projects along the US-Mexico border that benefit U.S. citizens by reducing the flow of transnational pollution flows into the United States.

### **Fiscal Year 2021 Appropriations**

#### ***FY21 Labor, Health and Human Services Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$46,123,000 for High School Equivalency Program (HEP) and the College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP). (increase of \$500,000 from FY20: \$45,623,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$378,501,000 for State Agency Program for Migrant Education (increase of \$875,000 from FY20: \$374,751,000)
- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$329,519,000 for Rural Health Programs (\$11,225,000 increase from FY20: \$318,294,000)

#### ***FY21 Agriculture, Rural Development, and Food and Drug Administration Appropriations***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$68,000,000 for Grants for Colonias, and Alaskan and Hawaiian Native Villages under Rural Water and Waste Disposal Program Account. (Level Funding with FY 20: \$68,000,000)

***FY21 Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies***

- **[REP. CUELLAR SECURED]**: \$30,000,000 for US-Mex Border EPA State and Tribal Assistance Grants under the U.S.-Mexico Border Water Infrastructure Program (BWIP). (Increase of \$5,000,000 from FY20: \$25,000,000).