



## **Fiscal Year 2027 Public Witness Testimony**

### **House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies**

**Submitted by Michele Jolin, Chief Executive Officer & Co-Founder, Results for America.**

**April 16, 2026**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of Results for America (RFA) and for the Committee's past support of efforts to advance programs that prioritize evidence of effectiveness. We are a national nonprofit organization that helps government leaders find, fund and implement solutions that work to accelerate upward economic mobility and improve lives.

We respectfully request funding and ask for your support for the following programs:

- \$91,000,000 – Promise Neighborhoods
- \$443,000,000 – Full-Service Community Schools
- \$60,000,000 – Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems (SLDS)
- \$55,000,000 – Postsecondary Student Success Grants
- \$50,000,000 – Advanced Workforce Development Innovation Demonstration (new program)

We also request report language to strengthen evidence-based grantmaking across Department programs.

### **Advancing Evidence-Based Policymaking**

Each year, the federal government awards more than \$150 billion in grants intended to improve economic outcomes for Americans across the country, yet less than one-quarter of this funding is directed towards interventions that are proven to be effective. Meanwhile, 89% percent of voters support evidence-based policymaking, including majorities in both parties, and 94% believe that evidence of what works should influence policymaking, according to a 2026 national voter survey from Echelon Insights.

RFA is focused on shifting federal dollars towards evidence-based approaches through federal grantmaking, including advocating for increased support for programs that define and prioritize evidence of effectiveness, as well as for advancing report language to extend these provisions to additional grant programs. Furthermore, RFA supports programs that strengthen data infrastructure, which is crucial in order to identify what works, for whom, and under what circumstances. Ultimately, investing in evidence-based approaches strengthens outcomes and



promotes accountability over taxpayer dollars by ensuring that federal resources are allocated to proven programs.

### Priority Programs

- **Promise Neighborhoods** (\$91,000,000) supports place-based initiatives that coordinate education, health, and social services through local anchor organizations with the goal of building a cradle-to-career pipeline tailored to community needs. Promise Neighborhoods align schools, nonprofits, and public agencies around shared outcomes and evidence-based approaches that have demonstrated strong outcomes. For example, in Indianola, Mississippi, the share of at-risk students passing the state reading assessment increased by 23 percentage points, from 36 percent to 59 percent. In Knox County, Kentucky, middle-grade attendance increased from 80 percent to 87 percent, alongside reductions in chronic absenteeism.
- **Full-Service Community Schools** (\$443,000,000) support integrating academics with healthcare, mental health, and family support. Research shows this model generates a return of approximately \$3 to \$15 for each dollar invested. In Leslie County, Kentucky, kindergarten readiness reached 79 percent, compared to a 53 percent statewide average, and learning loss during the pandemic was significantly lower than statewide trends.
- **Statewide Longitudinal Data Systems** (\$60,000,000) are essential to linking education and workforce data and measuring long-term outcomes. SLDS investments enable states to connect K–12, postsecondary, and workforce data systems, track outcomes such as employment and earnings, and support continuous improvement. Expanding SLDS capacity will address persistent data gaps and provide insights into program effectiveness among researchers, policymakers, and practitioners.
- **Postsecondary Student Success Grants** (\$55,000,000) support evidence-based strategies that improve college retention and completion, helping more students earn degrees and enter the workforce. This addresses a critical “skills gap,” particularly for jobs requiring education beyond high school but below a postgraduate degree. These grants support the scaling of proven models such as the City University of New York’s Accelerated Study in Associate Programs (ASAP), which has been shown through rigorous evaluation to nearly double three-year graduation rates (40 percent versus 22 percent for comparable students), demonstrating the impact of evidence-based strategies on student completion.
- **Advanced Workforce Development Innovation Demonstration** (\$50,000,000 along with the following report language). This new initiative would provide funding for an Advanced Workforce Development Innovation Demonstration Project. This fund would



be used to accelerate the development and scaling of evidence-based workforce strategies. We are asking for your support for the following report language:

- Advanced Workforce Development Innovation Demonstration Project. – The Committee provides \$50,000,000 for an Advanced Workforce Development Innovation Demonstration Project and directs the Secretary to use these funds to accelerate the development, rigorous evaluation, and scaling of evidence-based workforce strategies, programs, and tools that improve workers’ long-term economic outcomes. The Secretary shall structure the demonstration using three funding tiers —early-stage development, mid-tier validation, and expansion of proven models—to ensure successful strategies advance from demonstration to widespread implementation. In carrying out this initiative, the Secretary shall prioritize projects that incorporate strong evaluation designs that demonstrate sustained earnings gains, employment retention, or measurable productivity improvements for employers. The Secretary shall model the structure of the demonstration on the tiered evidence framework authorized under Section 4611 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. § 7261) and shall ensure awards are made through a transparent, competitive process. The Secretary shall ensure that a broad array of entities are eligible to participate, including State and local workforce development boards, non-governmental organizations, tribal organizations, and institutions of higher education.

The Fund shall also support the development and implementation of complementary infrastructure to accelerate research and development in the workforce field to expedite and evaluate projects under the Fund and otherwise. This infrastructure shall include technical assistance; privacy and cybersecurity assistance; the implementation of linked, open, and interoperable data, and the development of a secure enclave or platform that leverages privacy-protecting technologies to connect data on workforce development participation and outcomes, including data on earnings and employment.

- **Report Language Request: Evidence-Based Grantmaking.** This language would promote the consistent use of evidence at the Departments of Education and Labor by requiring that evidence of effectiveness be included as part of the selection criteria for discretionary grants. We are asking for your support for the following report language:
  - Evidence-Based Grant Making. – The Committee directs the Secretary to ensure that evidence of effectiveness and evidence building, with prioritization for causal evidence, is part of the selection criteria for all competitive grant programs and to provide enhancements to its technical assistance and support activities for applicants. Noncompetitive formula grant funds have a range of evidence



requirements and preferences which the Department is directed to support through enhancements to its technical assistance and support activities.

**Conclusion**

These requests reflect a coordinated and forward-looking approach to investing in what works. By funding and supporting programs that clearly define and prioritize evidence of effectiveness, expanding evidence requirements across additional grant programs, and making critical investments in data infrastructure, this approach strengthens the foundation for better decision-making.

Together, these efforts will enhance accountability to taxpayers and improve outcomes by ensuring that federal resources are directed toward proven, evidence-based strategies that deliver measurable results.

*Michèle Jolin*