

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

October 18, 2012

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius
Secretary
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Secretary Sebelius:

Head Start is one of the federal government's largest initiatives to improve the lives of the estimated 900,000 children it serves, who are among the most at-risk in our society. Since taxpayers spend more than \$14,000 for each child who is enrolled in the program for a full two years, totaling almost \$8 billion in FY 2012, it is absolutely critical to ensure this investment is making a real difference in children's lives—yielding lasting academic, social, and health benefits.

In 1998, Congress mandated the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) conduct a national evaluation of Head Start. Earlier this year, several senators wrote to request the results of the Head Start "Third Grade Follow-Up Study," which would be the most comprehensive study of the Head Start program's long-term impact in history. Despite an initial due date of September 2011 and a revised date of September 2012, the study has yet to be released.

We understand data collection for the third grade evaluation was completed in the spring of 2008—more than four years ago. We also understand the analysis of that data was completed in 2010. Congress and the American people deserve to know a simple question: why has HHS been unable to produce a final report more than four years after data from the Third Grade Follow-Up Study was collected and two years after the data analysis was complete? We request you immediately release the latest version of the study, explain in detail why there has been a continued delay in issuing the final report, and provide us with a firm date on which the final report will be released to the public.

In addition to the results requested in the previous letter, we would like more information about how HHS has managed this research project. Of particular concern is the increased cost estimate of \$10.6 million, up from \$6 million at the beginning of the project. Please explain in detail what drove up the cost factor and how the delay in the release of the report factored into this increase.

In addition, we request a copy of the following information relating to HHS Contract # HHSP23320062929YC and the Head Start Impact Study's Third Grade Follow-Up:

1. The contract file, including Westat's proposal;
2. All invoices submitted and paid under the contract;

The Honorable Kathleen Sebelius

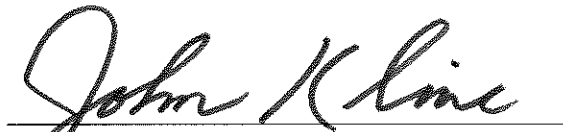
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3. All information associated with overhead and other billing rates, as well as fixed fees paid to Westat under the provisions of this contract;
4. All information related to specific or "key" personnel provided by Westat, or any of its subcontractors, providing services under this contract, including the labor rates billed to the government for such personnel, as well as their resumes or other documentation of their qualifications;
5. The last 12 monthly progress reports submitted under the contract; and
6. All summaries or other relevant information provided to the Advisory Committee on Head Start Research and Evaluation, as well as feedback or guidance that the Advisory Committee has provided to the researchers conducting the study.

We thank you in advance for your attention to this urgent manner and request a written response, which includes the requested information, by October 25, 2012.

Sincerely,



JOHN KLINE

Chairman

House Committee on Education and
the Workforce



TOM COBURN, MD

U.S. Senator