



July 5, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1036 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro:

On behalf of the Student Aid Alliance (SAA), we write to express our deep concerns with the drastic cuts proposed in the fiscal year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Subcommittee funding bill. While we are still waiting to learn of the funding levels for each student aid program, we strongly oppose the reported combined \$1.07 billion cut, equating to a 50% reduction in funding, to both the Federal Work-Study (FWS) program and the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) program.¹

The FWS and FSEOG programs together provide access to a postsecondary education for over 2 million low-income students nationwide.² The FWS program provides over \$1.2 billion in federal and institutional funding. This program supports part-time employment for more than 600,000 financially needy undergraduate and graduate students to help them pay their college costs while gaining valuable work experience.³ In addition, the FSEOG program serves students with the most need by awarding them additional grant funds, in amounts up to \$4,000, to help them access and complete their postsecondary education. Over 1.6 million low-income students participate in this program, and participating colleges and universities match federal dollars to make more than \$1.2 billion in grant aid available. Cutting funding for the FWS and FSEOG programs by 50% would cause serious harm to the ability of eligible students to access the appropriate level of funding needed to complete their degrees.

We understand the fiscal constraints imposed by the statutory spending caps in the *Fiscal Responsibility Act* (FRA). However, we believe it is imperative that Congress provides additional funding for non-defense discretionary programs beyond the statutory spending caps in the FRA, allowing for a higher allocation in education funding, as the FY 2025 process continues. Overall, this bill falls woefully short of what is in the best interest of students, and we strongly urge you to increase the funding levels for student aid during the full House Committee on Appropriations markup.

¹ Committee on Appropriations (Democrats). (2024). *Summary of Republican fiscal year 2025 bill*. Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies, U.S. House of Representatives. <https://democrats-appropriations.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/democrats-appropriations.house.gov/files/evo-media-document/Labor.%20Health%20and%20Human%20Services.%20Education.%20and%20Related%20Agencies%20Summary.pdf>

² Department of Education. (2024). *Fiscal year 2025 budget request*. <https://www2.ed.gov/about/overview/budget/budget25/justifications/q-sfa.pdf>

³ Ibid.

We appreciate that the Pell Grant maximum award level was not cut and the Pell Grant reserve is maintained. We are also thankful that the bill does not cut the Federal TRIO Programs or GEAR UP. However, we strongly believe that Congress must continue to increase funding for the Pell Grant program and the other federal student aid programs impacting low-income students. The Pell Grant program alone supports over 6 million students and serves as the cornerstone of federal financial student aid.⁴

As we have done before, we call on Congress to continue its bipartisan support of federal student aid programs. These programs play a vital role by providing a much-needed investment in our future leaders.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

SAA Steering Committee



Mark Becker
President, Association of Public
and Land-grant Universities



Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D.
President and CEO, American Association
of Community Colleges



Kimberly Jones
President, Council for Opportunity in
Education



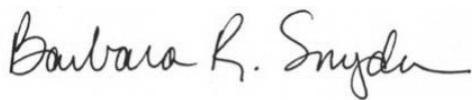
Beth Maglione
Interim President and CEO, National
Association of Student Financial Aid
Administrators



Barbara K. Mistick
President, National Association of
Independent Colleges and Universities



Ted Mitchell
President, American Council on Education



Barbara R. Snyder
President, Association of American
Universities



Dr. Charles L. Welch
President and CEO, American Association of
State Colleges and Universities

⁴ Ibid.

Members of the Student Aid Alliance:

Achieving the Dream
ACPA – College Student Educators International
ACT, Inc.
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
American Federation of Teachers
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
American Psychological Association
APPA
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Consortium on Financing Higher Education
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Independent Colleges
Council on Social Work Education
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NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of College Stores
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education
National Association of Graduate-Professional Students
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National College Attainment Network (NCAN)
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Education Association
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
The Phi Beta Kappa Society
UPCEA – Leaders in Professional, Continuing and Online Education
Work Colleges Consortium
Yes We Must Coalition

cc: Members of the House Committee on Appropriations