

Student Aid Alliance

December 19, 2013

Representative Harold Rogers
Chair
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Barbara Mikulski
Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Representative Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Richard Shelby
Vice-Chair
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the millions of students, educators, administrators and college presidents we represent, we write to request that you provide the highest possible allocation for the fiscal year 2014 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, and use this funding to reverse the harmful cuts to student financial aid imposed by sequestration.

With the passage of the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2013, Congress has the opportunity to undo the damage caused by sequestration to American college students. Across-the-board cuts reduced critical student aid funding just as demand for educated workers spiked.

Examples of these cuts include:

- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) funding was reduced by over \$38 million in FY13. These funds are overmatched by institutions to provide much greater aid to Pell-eligible students than the federal investment alone would allow.

- Federal Work-Study (FWS) funding was cut by more than \$51 million, reducing aid to low-income students working to support their educations.
- Federal TRIO Programs saw their funding slashed by nearly \$44 million, causing a disproportionate reduction in the services offered to students working to prepare for and complete their postsecondary degrees.
- Similarly, Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) funding was cut by almost \$16 million, undercutting these critical efforts to prepare low-income students for college.

These cuts do not include the sequestration-imposed increase in origination fees on loans, which forces students to pay more to the federal government simply for the right to borrow. Combined with previous funding cuts, the budget-driven elimination of the LEAP Program, and a decades-long trend of states' substantial divestment in higher education funding, college access and success have never been more challenging for low- and middle-income students.

This is a deeply counterproductive policy at a time when our economic competitors are pouring money into their postsecondary education systems. Our nation needs the skilled, innovative thinkers that colleges and universities produce to grow our economy. There is an expanding shortage of workers qualified to fill available positions, while unemployment is still too high.

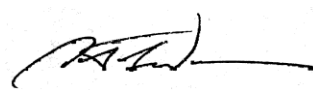
The FY14 appropriations bills will offer Congress the opportunity to begin addressing these challenges, and to move toward greater competitiveness, productivity and economic growth through a better educated workforce.

We urge you to support the financial aid programs and reverse the harmful cuts imposed by sequestration in the FY14 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Sincerely,



Molly Corbett Broad
Co-Chairman



David Warren
Co-Chairman



AACRAO: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
Alliance for Excellent Education
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
American Student Association of Community Colleges
Association of American 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
Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organization
College Parents of America
Columbia University
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Educational Testing Service
EDUCAUSE
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Michigan State University
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

2013 Members

National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of College Stores
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
National College Access Network
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of Higher Education Loan Resources
National Education Association
National Education Organization
New York Higher Education Services Corporation
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
The California State University
The College Board
The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising
The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
The National Collegiate Athletic Association
The Ohio State University
UNCF
United States Student Association
University of California
University of Maryland System
University of Michigan
University of Southern California
University of Washington
Utah Valley State College
Vanderbilt University