

March 22, 2018

Rep. Paul Ryan
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Rep. Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Sen. Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United State Senate
S-309, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Sen. Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-309, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned associations, representing thousands of colleges and millions of educators and staff, we write to thank you for the commitment to student aid and scientific research in the Fiscal Year 2018 Consolidated Appropriations Act. Over the last decade, in difficult fiscal climates, Congress has consistently worked in a bipartisan manner to maintain support for these important programs. The new investments provided in this legislation will expand upon those efforts and bolster the programs that underlie America's economic strength. We appreciate the House's passage of the bill and strongly urge the Senate to follow suit when it is brought to the floor for a vote.

There are numerous aspects of this bill that our members appreciate. In particular, the omnibus enhances the Pell Grant program, which is projected to help over 7 million low-income families afford college. It does this by raising the maximum award by \$175 (to \$6,095), maintaining the recent Year Round Pell expansion and keeping existing program funding within Pell Grants.

The omnibus recognizes the many benefits of medical research to our society and our economy by including a \$3 billion increase in funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Considering the funding made available through the 21st Century Cures Act and previous appropriations, this increase will allow for more life-changing research to be performed, enabling major scientific breakthroughs and improving the quality of life for all Americans.

Beyond these signature proposals, there are meaningful investments across the bill in the areas of student aid, career and workforce training, institutional support and scientific research. The Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Federal Work Study,

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TRIO and GEAR UP programs all receive meaningful increases to support the preparation, access and success of low- and middle-income students. We were similarly pleased that the bill includes important funding for provisions to enhance the Public Service Loan Forgiveness provision and increase its reach. The bill adds \$50 million in new funding for Apprenticeship Opportunities and new funding for key workforce-related programs, including WIOA, the Carl Perkins Act, as well as adult education.

The Title III and Title V programs, particularly those supporting minority-serving and low-resourced institutions like community colleges, received 14.3% increases to expand their ability to provide a quality education to the most underrepresented students. Additional support for agencies such as the National Science Foundation, the Department of Energy and NASA that perform advanced research with significant scientific, economic and military implications advances America's ability to compete with our global rivals. Finally, increased funding for agencies such as the National Endowment for the Humanities and the National Endowment for the Arts will continue the promotion and development of our cultural assets.

While the overall bill is a clear expression of Congress's commitment to students, schools and researchers, we are disappointed to see that a legislative solution to the current status of Dreamers was not included in the final legislation. There is broad support across both parties for providing legal status to these young people and the benefits they bring to our country. We urge you in your roles as leaders to work towards a resolution of the DACA issue soon.

Overall, the FY18 Consolidated Appropriations Act recognizes that our current and future strength as a country depends on an educated workforce that is on the leading edge of research and innovation. We appreciate the choices Congress has made to prioritize the student aid, scientific research and higher education programs overall.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell
President

On behalf of:

ACPA-College Student Educators International
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
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 Indian Higher Education Consortium (AIHEC)
APPA, Leadership in Educational Facilities

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Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Medical Colleges
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
Association of Research Libraries
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Council on Governmental Relations
Educational Testing Service
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Collegiate Athletic Association
Phi Beta Kappa Society
The College Board
The Common Application
UPCEA