May 3, 2017

Representative Paul Ryan
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

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

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

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

On behalf of the undersigned associations, we write to express our strong support for passage of H.R. 244, the Fiscal Year 2017 Consolidated Appropriations Act. We are particularly appreciative that the bill includes the restoration of year-round Pell Grants and a significant increase for the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Across the board, this bill provides needed funding in the programs that educate American students, drive technological innovation, strengthen our economy and build opportunity.

The restoration of year-round Pell Grants will allow the program to meet the needs of America’s students. By providing approximately one million students with an average of $1,650 in additional grant funding if they are enrolled throughout the year, this provision will accelerate their time to degree and allow them to enter the workforce sooner. While we are concerned with the possible impact the rescission of existing program funds will have on the program, we appreciate the constraints this bill was produced under and the greater overall good provided by expanding the benefits for deserving students.

The bill also includes a $2 billion increase for the NIH, including $352 million provided in the 21st Century Cures Act. In combination with existing funding, this will greatly enhance the capability of the institutes to pursue the cutting-edge medical and scientific research that leads to new cures, promising areas of treatments and the development of new technologies that meaningfully improve the lives of every American.

Beyond these two critical programs, we are grateful to see the preservation or expansion of numerous other programs in the areas of student aid, scientific research and institutional support. Increases for TRIO and GEAR UP will mean more, and better-prepared, low-income students in college. Increased support for the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the Department of Energy, the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities, among many others, will strengthen our research capabilities and enhance our ability to compete internationally.
Continued support for key programs such as Federal Work-Study, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and the programs supporting Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-Serving Institutions, Tribal Colleges and Universities and many more will help ensure that all students are able to pursue and achieve their academic and economic goals.

We thank Congress for the commitment they’ve demonstrated to students, educators, researchers and institutions, and we look forward to seeing this legislation enacted.

Sincerely,

Molly Corbett Broad
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 Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Association of American Medical 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
Association of Research Libraries
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges and 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
H.R. 244, FY17 Appropriations
May 3, 2017

National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association of System Heads
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of University Research Administrators
UNCF