

June 6, 2025

The Honorable John Thune  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mike Johnson  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Schumer  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries  
Democratic Leader  
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of more than 170 signers representing education advocates, colleges and universities, state higher education executives, workforce development organizations, college access organizations, consumer advocates, civil rights organizations, unions, student loan lenders and servicers, and the business community, we write to urge you to invest in our nation's workforce by fully funding the Pell Grant program and rejecting any proposed eligibility cuts. More than seven million students across the nation rely on Pell Grants to pay for college. Any program or eligibility cuts would increase costs for families and significantly reduce college enrollment and graduation rates.

In January, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released new supplemental projections for the Pell Grant program showing that absent congressional action, the program will face a \$2.7 billion funding shortfall by the end of the current fiscal year (FY25), and a \$10.3 billion shortfall by the end of FY26 (the fiscal year currently being debated in Congress). We urge lawmakers to preemptively address this projected funding gap by investing sufficient new mandatory funds to address the shortfall for at least the next two fiscal years, without making any eligibility cuts.

Fully funding the Pell Grant program is one of the smartest, most targeted investments lawmakers can make to fuel economic growth. By making increases to targeted grant aid, lawmakers will reduce student loan borrowing, increase graduation rates, and improve labor market outcomes. The maximum Pell Grant award already covers the lowest share of college costs in the program's history, contributing to a persistent "affordability gap" that forces low- and middle-income students to either take out loans or forgo higher education and training entirely.

In December of 2020, President Trump signed a bipartisan expansion of Pell Grants under the *FAFSA Simplification Act*, which streamlined students' access to financial aid and increased the number of Pell recipients. This historic achievement must be preserved. Addressing the funding shortfall by making eligibility cuts would be short-sighted and damaging to our economic growth.

We strongly urge you to invest in our nation's students and our economic future by fully funding the Pell Grant program and rejecting any proposed cuts to the program.

Sincerely,

10,000 Degrees  
AACTE: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
Achieve Atlanta  
ACPA-College Student Educators International

Adoption Network Cleveland  
AdvancED Consulting, LLC  
AFT, AFL-CIO  
Alabama Possible  
Alliance for a Better Community  
Alray Scholars Program  
Alumni of Care Together Improving Outcomes Now (ACTION Ohio)  
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Association of University Women (AAUW)  
American Council on Education  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)  
American Indian College Fund  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)  
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Battle Creek Promise Zone and College Access Network  
Benton Harbor Promise Zone Authority  
BEST Benzie County Local College Access Network  
Better Future Foundation  
BLU Educational Foundation  
Bottom Line  
Breakthrough Central Texas  
Cal State Student Association  
California Alliance for Student Parent Success  
California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy  
California EDGE Coalition  
Capital Area College Access Network  
Center for Higher Education Policy and Practice (CHEPP) at SNHU  
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)  
Central Scholarship  
Charting Careers  
Children Now  
Children's Advocacy Institute  
COABE  
College Access Plan  
College AIM  
College and Career Access Center of Jackson, Michigan  
College Now Greater Cleveland  
College Possible  
College Success Foundation  
CollegeTracks  
Columbus State Scholar Network  
Community Bridges, Inc.

Council for Christian Colleges & Universities  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Council of Independent Colleges  
Crosby Scholars Community Partnership  
Crosby Scholars Iredell  
Denver Scholarship Foundation  
Detroit Regional Dollars for Scholars  
DSST Public Schools  
Easley Blessed Foundation  
ECCO Community Center  
EdTrust  
EdTrust-West  
Education Finance Council  
Education Forward Arizona  
Education to Employment Partners  
EDUCAUSE  
Excelencia in Education  
FAME - Foundation for the Advancement of Music & Education  
Finance Authority of Maine (FAME)  
First Generation College Bound  
FirstGen Forward  
Foster Success  
FosterHub  
Fostering Academic Achievement Nationwide (FAAN)  
Fulfillment Fund  
FuturesNW  
GenOne  
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce  
GO Public Schools  
GRASP (Great Aspirations Scholarship Program)  
Great Jobs KC  
Green Halo Scholars  
Hamilton County JFS  
Hamilton County Youth Advisory Board  
Heer to Serve  
Heights Philadelphia  
Higher Education Loan Coalition (HELC)  
Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA)  
Hildreth Institute  
Hill Country Adventure Therapy  
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE)  
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities  
I Know I Can  
iFoster  
Indigenous Education, Inc.  
Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)  
Iredell County Crosby Scholars Community Partnership  
John Burton Advocates for Youth

Just Strategy  
KIPP Foundation  
Latino U College Access  
LeadMN  
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services  
Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation  
Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT)  
Mason County College Access Network and Promise Zone  
Michigan League for Public Policy  
Missouri College and Career Attainment Network  
More Than Bootstraps  
NAACP  
National Association for College Admission Counseling  
National Association of College University Business Officers  
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs (NASSGAP)  
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators  
National College Attainment Network  
National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)  
National Council of Higher Education Resources  
National Education Association  
National Young Farmers Coalition  
New America, Higher Education Policy Program  
New York Public Interest Research Group  
NextGen CA  
Niswonger Foundation  
NOAR  
Noble Network of Charter Schools  
Northern California College Promise Coalition  
Oceana College Access Network  
Ohana Project  
Ohio Student Association  
On Point for College  
One Family  
Opt-In Iowa  
Overcoming Hurdles in Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OHIO YAB)  
Parent Institute for Quality Education  
PelotonU  
Pennies from Heaven Foundation  
Petey Greene Program  
Phi Beta Kappa Society  
Phi Theta Kappa Foundation  
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society  
Philadelphia College Prep Roundtable  
Play Right Sports Academy  
Public Advocates, Inc.  
Ready to Succeed  
Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC)  
San Antonio Education Partnership

Say Yes Syracuse Scholarship Program (Central New York Community Foundation)  
SchoolHouse Connection  
Southern California College Attainment Network  
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association  
Students Rising Above  
Students United  
Swipe Out Hunger  
The Campaign for College Opportunity  
The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs  
The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)  
The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis  
Third Way  
TN College Access & Success Network  
Today's Students Coalition  
Toledo Tomorrow  
uAspire  
Understandingfalsa.org  
UnidosUS  
UNITE-LA  
University of California Student Association (UCSA)  
Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation  
Woodward Hines Education Foundation  
Yes We Must Coalition  
Young Invincibles  
Youth Advisory Board  
Youth Law Center

cc:

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D., Chair, Senate HELP Committee  
The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member, Senate HELP Committee  
The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Tim Walberg, Chair, House Committee on Education and Workforce  
The Honorable Bobby Scott, Ranking Member, House Committee on Education and  
Workforce  
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee  
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee