May 19, 2011

The Honorable Denny Rehberg  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education  
House Appropriations Committee  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Rehberg and Ranking Member DeLauro:

We write to you to support the Pell Grant maximum award of $5,550, as proposed in the President's budget, for students who want to pursue their higher education dreams, but have limited means to attend and graduate from college.

Pell Grants are the cornerstone of our nation's student aid program, currently enabling more than 9 million students to get the higher education and job training they and our nation need. In these tough economic times, Americans need a postsecondary degree in order to get a good job. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the unemployment rate for those with a high school diploma or less was 12 percent compared to those with a bachelor's degree at 4.5 percent. Moreover, employees with a bachelor's degree earn $20,748 more than employees with high school diplomas.

If America wants to remain competitive in the world, we need more students graduating with a college degree. Eighty percent of the fastest growing jobs in the country demand training above a high school level. Our workforce needs 22 million more degrees by 2018, but we will fall short by three million degrees if we cannot increase post-secondary graduation rates. At the same time, states have cut funding to higher education, pushing even more of the cost on to students and their families.

Pell Grants are essential to America's future. We urge you to maintain the $5,550 maximum Pell Grant, as requested by the President for FY2012.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
List of Co-Signers

Rep. Tammy Baldwin
Rep. Shelley Berkley
Rep. Howard Berman
Rep. Tim Bishop
Rep. Leonard Boswell
Rep. Earl Blumenauer
Rep. Robert Brady
Rep. Bruce Braley
Rep. Corrine Brown
Rep. Lois Capps
Rep. Michael E. Capuano
Rep. Russ Carnahan
Rep. André Carson
Rep. David Cicilline
Rep. Hansen Clarke
Rep. Yvette Clarke
Rep. Steve Cohen
Rep. Gerald Connolly
Rep. Jim Costa
Rep. Joe Courtney
Rep. Mark Critz
Rep. Joe Crowley
Rep. Elijah Cummings
Rep. Danny Davis
Rep. Susan Davis
Rep. Peter DeFazio
Rep. Diana DeGette
Rep. Theodore E. Deutch
Rep. John Dingell
Rep. Lloyd Doggett
Rep. Donna Edwards
Rep. Keith Ellison
Rep. Eliot Engel
Rep. Chaka Fattah
Rep. Bob Filner
Rep. Barney Frank
Rep. Marcia Fudge
Rep. Raúl M. Grijalva
Rep. Luis Gutiérrez
Rep. Colleen Hanabusa
Rep. Alcee Hastings
Rep. Martin Heinrich
Rep. Brian Higgins
Rep. Maurice Hinchey
Rep. Mazie Hirono
Rep. Rush Holt
Rep. Steve Israel
Rep. Shelia Jackson-Lee
Rep. Eddie Bernice Johnson
Rep. Hank Johnson
Rep. Dale Kildee
Rep. Ron Kind
Rep. Dennis Kucinich
Rep. Jim Langevin
Rep. Rick Larsen
Rep. Sander Levin
Rep. John Lewis
Rep. Dan Lipinski
Rep. Dave Loebsack
Rep. Zoe Lofgren
Rep. Ben Ray Luján
Rep. Stephen Lynch
Rep. Carolyn Maloney
Rep. Doris Matsui
Rep. Jim McGovern
Rep. Mike McIntyre
Rep. Brad Miller
Rep. Gregory Meeks
Rep. Gwen Moore
Rep. Jerry Nadler
Rep. Grace Napolitano
Rep. Eleanor Holmes Norton
Rep. Donald Payne
Rep. Pedro Pierluisi
Rep. Mike Quigley
Rep. Nick Rahall, II
Rep. Charles Rangel
Rep. Silvestre Reyes
Rep. Laura Richardson
Rep. Cedric Richmond
Rep. Mike Ross
Rep. Tim Ryan
Rep. Gregorio Kilili Camacho Sablan
Rep. Linda Sánchez
Rep. Loretta Sanchez
Rep. Bobby Scott
Rep. David Scott
Rep. Terri Sewell
Rep. Brad Sherman
Rep. Albio Sires
Rep. Louise Slaughter
Rep. Adam Smith
Rep. Pete Stark
Rep. Mike Thompson
Rep. Edolphus Towns
Rep. Chris Van Hollen
Rep. Maxine Waters
Rep. Henry Waxman
Rep. Peter Welch
Rep. Lynn Woolsey
Rep. David Wu
Rep. John Yarmuth