



Leadership and Advocacy

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March 16, 2017

Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Thad Cochran
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Room S128, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Roy Blunt
Chairman
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
131 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States House of Representatives
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Room S-146A, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
156 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members of the Appropriations Committee and Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies:

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we write to express our strong support for the restoration of year-round Pell Grants in the Fiscal Year 2017 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Pell Grants are the foundational undergraduate student aid program, and nearly eight million low- and middle-income students depend on Pell Grants to afford college. Currently, students who depend

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on Pell must often halt their studies each summer because the aid they rely on is not available, as a result of cuts made by Congress in 2010. Year-round Pell Grants were eliminated because Congress had to address an \$11 billion shortfall in the program at the time, not because of opposition to the policy itself. Now that the program has a projected \$10.5 billion surplus in FY 17, the time is right to reinstate this provision and broaden access and opportunity for America's students.

As Speaker Ryan noted last week, the restoration of year-round Pell Grants "makes a lot of sense." Allowing all students, regardless of their credit accumulation or enrollment intensity, to access this program throughout the year reflects the reality of modern higher education. Increasingly, students are pursuing their educations year-round with the goal of entering (or re-entering) the workforce as soon as possible. Enabling low-income students this flexibility will speed their progress to a degree and enhance their economic opportunities.

As a result, year-round Pell enjoys broad bipartisan support in Congress, near-universal endorsement among policy experts, and was included in the Senate's FY17 on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill. With one exception, the language in the Senate bill includes key provisions that will ensure that year-round Pell Grants are responsibly awarded while also minimizing administrative burden on institutions and financial aid officers. The exception is the requirement that a student be enrolled at least half-time in the term for which the extra Pell award is sought; in many instances, the extra term is summer, when students are also ramping up their employment to earn funds for the upcoming year. For those reasons, we would urge you to incorporate the language in the Senate bill, amended to allow year-round Pell regardless of enrollment status in the extra term, as part of the restoration of this provision.

We thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and urge you to support America's students and restore year-round Pell Grants in the final FY17 appropriations.

Sincerely,

Molly Corbett Broad



President

On behalf of:

ACPA - College Student Educators International

ACT

American Dental Education Association

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Association of University Professors

American Council on Education

American Indian Higher Education Consortium

APPA – Leadership in Educational Facilities

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Association of American Colleges & Universities
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
College Board
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Independent Colleges
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NAFSA - Association of International Educators
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Adult Learner Coalition
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
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
Thurgood Marshall College Fund
UNCF
University Professional and Continuing Education Association