

## Support College Students and Institutions of Higher Education During COVID-19 Response and Recovery

**Endorsed by:** Association of American Universities, American Public and Land-grant Universities, Council for Christian Colleges and Universities, Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities, American Association of Community Colleges, and the American Council on Education.

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in urging House Leadership to provide critical relief for higher education institutions and students in an upcoming COVID-19 response package.

American colleges and universities are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Institutions confronted staggering revenue losses and unexpected expenses as they implemented distancing measures to protect their students and faculty, and face continued revenue losses next year. Students are assessing changes to their families' financial situations and reevaluating their academic plans for the fall. Congress must act now to provide strong assistance to students and institutions of higher education to ensure that students are not priced out of higher education that will be essential for workforce development, and to ensure that colleges and universities remain stable engines of economic growth.

If you have any questions or would like to cosign this letter, please reach out to Caitlyn McGuire with Rep. Lipinski ([caitlyn.mcguire@mail.house.gov](mailto:caitlyn.mcguire@mail.house.gov), 202-407-0565) or Andrew Nicholson with Rep. Brooks ([andrew.nicholson@mail.house.gov](mailto:andrew.nicholson@mail.house.gov), 202-225-2276) by May 12, 2020.

Sincerely,

Daniel W. Lipinski  
Member of Congress

Susan Brooks  
Member of Congress

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April XX, 2020

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker of the House

United States House of Representatives

H-232, U.S. Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy

Minority Leader

United States House of Representatives

H-204, U.S. Capitol

Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy,

As you consider future federal aid legislation to guide the nation's response to COVID-19, we write to request an additional \$47 billion in supplemental funding to stabilize universities and colleges and support students pursuing higher education. These institutions are essential to a strong recovery by ensuring that we have a highly-trained workforce and continue our global leadership in research and innovation.

American colleges and universities are facing unprecedented challenges as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, including shouldering the financial burden of the transition to distance learning, refunding some room and dining expenses, and managing its associated impacts. Meanwhile, students are reevaluating their plans for the fall semester in light of rapid changes in their families' financial circumstances, public health concerns, and restrictions coronavirus imposes to learning in a classroom setting. For these reasons, colleges and universities are expecting significant, potentially unparalleled, declines in enrollment, both from current students who cannot afford to return, and those who will never start. Institutions are also bracing for depleted endowments and state budget cuts that will further strain the much needed ability to support student learning in the next academic year.

In the aftermath of the 2008 recession, many lower- and middle-income Americans were priced out of higher education. Congress must act to provide strong assistance to students, their families, and institutions of higher education to enable colleges and universities to remain economic engines in their regions and ensure our nation can continue to compete globally by investing in a highly-skilled workforce.

The CARES Act took an important first step in delivering critical relief and addressing the immediate financial needs of our most vulnerable students, but significant further investment is necessary. To meet both existing need and to ensure students and families have the resources to return to college in the fall, we request a \$47 billion supplemental appropriations to the Department of Education to be disbursed as formula grants to institutions of higher education. We propose that at least 50% of the funds be allocated to address student financial need and request sufficient flexibility to address sudden changes in students' circumstances due to the economic decline. The remaining funds may be used by institutions to cover costs associated with losses due to the coronavirus. As students are currently making decisions about their fall semester plans, it is necessary for the federal government to act swiftly in making additional funds available to support investing in our nation's students, families, and higher education system. We recommend utilizing the same allocation and distribution formula created in the CARES Act which has the benefit of allowing for swift disbursement of assistance

This investment will ensure that universities and colleges continue doing their part to fight COVID-19 and provide a foundation for our future economy. More importantly, this investment ensures that as we emerge from our current health crisis, and our lower- and middle-income students will not be left behind.

Thank you for your kind consideration of our request to provide direct relief for students and institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,

DANIEL W. LIPINSKI

Member of Congress

SUSAN BROOKS

Member(s) of Congress