

TRIO FY2023 Senate Appropriations Letter for Sign-on



The Honorable Patty Murray, Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations
136 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations
156 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

We write to thank you for your strong support of the Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) and to request that you provide robust funding for these programs in the fiscal year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. In recent years, the Committee has provided strong support for the TRIO programs and the students they serve: low-income, first-generation students, students with disabilities, homeless youths, students in or exiting foster care, military veterans, English learners, unemployed adults, and students in rural communities. As you prepare your FY 2023 appropriations bill, we ask that you prioritize the academic, financial, and social supports provided by TRIO so that these students can benefit from these life-changing services.

The COVID-19 crisis has negatively impacted every stage of our education system, thus making the need for targeted investments in TRIO all the more urgent. The National Student Clearinghouse Research Center reported that in fall 2021, there were 213,400 fewer college freshmen than pre-pandemic levels, a 9.2 percent drop. For students from high-poverty high schools, the immediate college enrollment rate fell even further, by a staggering 13 percent from 2019 to 2021. Without TRIO's individualized counseling, advising, and support, an entire generation of low-income, first-generation students may be lost. As TRIO programs seek to address these challenges, we urge the Committee to continue to prioritize TRIO funding to help ensure students are prepared for, persist in, and graduate from college.

TRIO programs serve students from middle school through college graduation, including disconnected youth, low-wage adults, and veterans. Since their inception, TRIO programs have produced more than six million college graduates. Talent Search provides college outreach services to low-income middle and high school students. Upward Bound provides high school students with tutoring, mentoring and college counseling during the school year and a six-week residential college experience, all with the aim of improving college enrollment and attainment. Upward Bound Math-Science uses a similar model, with the goal of encouraging participants to pursue postsecondary degrees and careers in STEM fields. Student Support Services promotes college retention and attainment for low-income, first-generation undergraduates and students with disabilities. The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program provides undergraduates with opportunities for research, internships, seminars, tutoring, and academic counseling, with the goal of students from disadvantaged backgrounds earning doctoral degrees. This year two TRIO programs are celebrating their 50th anniversary: Veterans Upward Bound provides academic tutoring and counseling to help support military veterans' enrollment in and completion of postsecondary education; and Educational Opportunity Centers assist unemployed and low-income adults in re-entering the education pipeline.

We appreciate the Committee's continued commitment to TRIO. Given the programs' proven success and the need to address higher education access, affordability, and completion, we respectfully request your support of robust funding for TRIO in FY 2023.

Sincerely,
UNITED STATES SENATORS

**To sign: [Martin Menezes@collins.senate.gov](mailto:Martin.Menezes@collins.senate.gov) (Sen. Collins) or [Stephanie Johnson@tester.senate.gov](mailto:Stephanie.Johnson@tester.senate.gov) (Sen. Tester)