



September 29, 2023

The Honorable Shalanda Young
Director
Office of Management and Budget
725 17th St NW
Washington, DC 20503

Dear Director Young,

As the Biden administration works to develop its Fiscal Year 2025 budget request to Congress, we are pleased to write on behalf of the Association of American Universities (AAU) and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU) to convey the importance of significant and robust funding for scientific research and higher education investments that advance the health, security, and prosperity of our nation.

We recognize and commend the administration for its ongoing commitment to America's scientific research enterprise and to bolstering America's status as the world's leader in scientific research and innovation. We also appreciate the administration's support for doubling the maximum Pell Grant and its commitment to make steady progress in furtherance of the goal, which would make college more accessible and affordable for low-income students.

As you prepare the FY25 budget request, we recognize Congress has not yet completed the FY24 appropriations process and urge the administration's support to prevent deeply concerning cuts to discretionary spending programs that have been proposed as part of that process.

Innovating for the Future

We commend the administration's research and development [priorities](#) for the FY25 budget. Federal funding for R&D is "integral to the just, vibrant, and ambitious future that America seeks." As the federal government seeks to advance trustworthy artificial intelligence technology, lead the world in maintaining global security and stability, and increase economic growth and reduce economic disparities, research universities are eager to partner with the administration. We urge the administration to remember the bold goals set forth in the CHIPS and Science Act to significantly invest in our nation's scientific research and innovation enterprise. Research universities are partners with the federal government and the private sector in developing the foundational knowledge base that enables the development of new technologies that drive our nation forward by improving our health, boosting our economy, safeguarding our national security, and advancing our overall wellbeing. Additionally, our nation's research universities develop the world's best scientists, doctors, engineers, and entrepreneurs.

The administration has begun to announce CHIPS-sponsored research hubs that will help support a vitally important industry sector that we all want to strengthen domestically. While we welcome that,

additional investments are needed. Sustained growth in research funding for artificial intelligence, advanced energy, agriculture, materials science, and biomedical science is crucial to ensuring the United States does not lose its status as the global leader in science and innovation and to strengthening our economic competitiveness and national security.

In support of your agenda, we urge that the administration's FY25 budget make strong investments in key federal science and research agencies, including:

- National Institutes of Health;
- National Science Foundation;
- Department of Energy's Office of Science and ARPA-E;
- Department of Defense's Science and Technology programs and DARPA;
- National Aeronautics and Space Administration;
- National Endowment for the Humanities;
- Department of Agriculture's National Institute of Food and Agriculture - particularly agriculture research, capacity building, and extension programs;
- Department of Commerce's National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and National Institute of Standards and Technology;
- Department of Education's Institute of Education Sciences; and
- U.S. Agency for International Development – particularly the Feed the Future Innovation Labs and Higher Education Programs.

Building Broad-Based Economic Prosperity Through Higher Education

Additionally, we urge that the administration's FY25 budget include significant investments in student financial aid to help fully open the doors to college and to prepare the next-generation American workforce. Specifically, we urge you to include another significant increase to the Pell Grant maximum award, consistent with President Biden's stated goal of doubling the award, and to substantially grow Federal Work Study (FWS) and Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants (SEOG). FWS and SEOG provide critical support to low-income students and work hand-in-hand with Pell to keep students on the path to degree completion. We were disappointed that the Biden administration only requested flat funding for FWS and SEOG in its FY24 request and note the programs would be cut under both House (elimination) and Senate (by \$10 million) FY24 appropriations proposals. We urge the administration to send the right message about the importance of these vital student aid programs, which complement and work in conjunction with Pell, by proposing appropriate increases in FY25.

We also appreciate the administration's sustained focus on funding for student success and college completion and encourage the administration to continue supporting robust funding for these programs in its FY25 budget. This includes investments in TRIO programs, GEAR UP programs, Title III and V programs that support HBCUs and MSIs, and other critical Department of Education student aid and institutional support programs. These programs provide students access to high-quality higher

education, facilitate pathways to success and degree completion, and help to level the playing field so that all Americans can benefit from the life transforming opportunities of high-quality higher education.

Additionally, we request robust support for international education programs. The Department of Education's Title VI (domestic) and Fulbright-Hays (overseas) programs expand the international competency skills for the nation's next generation workforce advancing American global leadership, economic competitiveness, and long-term security through language and culture programs. Years of stagnant funding have resulted in a reduction of programming, endangering the domestic pipeline of experts in strategically important languages and cultures while also reducing opportunities for students to develop global competencies.

Finally, we ask that the administration's FY25 budget include robust funding levels for graduate education. We urge increased investment across federal agencies in graduate fellowship and traineeship programs, including the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program, which assists talented students studying in areas such as STEM. These programs are important to our nation's security and competitiveness because they are the primary training system for producing linguistically proficient, area-savvy graduates who go on to successful careers in government, military, academia, and business.

In closing, we thank you and the administration for your efforts to foster a successful government-university-industry partnership and to make higher education more accessible and affordable. This is critical to keeping the United States at the forefront of cutting-edge research and innovation and to the education of a highly skilled workforce. If we can provide any additional information or assistance, please contact us or Craig Lindwarm (clindwarm@aplu.org) and Toby Smith (Toby_Smith@aau.edu).

Sincerely,



Mark Becker

President

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities



Barbara R. Snyder

President

Association of American Universities

cc: Lloyd J. Austin, Secretary, Department of Defense

Miguel Cardona, Secretary, Department of Education

Jennifer M. Granholm, Secretary, Department of Energy

Shelly C. Lowe, Chair, National Endowment for the Humanities

Arati Prabhakar, Director, White House Office of Science and Technology Policy

Bill Nelson, Administrator, National Aeronautics and Space Administration

Laurie E. Locascio, Director, National Institutes of Standards and Technology

Sethuraman Panchanathan, Director, National Science Foundation

Samantha Power, Administrator, U.S. Agency for International Development

Richard W. Spinrad, Administrator, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

Lawrence A. Tabak, Acting Director, National Institutes of Health

Tom Vilsack, Secretary, Department of Agriculture