



STATEMENT OF PAULINE ABERNATHY
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House FY17 Funding Bill Cuts Pell Grants by \$1.3 Billion, Blocks Gainful Employment Rule

“The draft [House FY2017 appropriations bill](#) scheduled to be considered in committee tomorrow cuts Pell Grant funding by \$1.3 billion, raiding funds needed to help millions of low- and moderate-income students struggling to attend and complete college. We join the [122 Members of Congress](#) who today implored House appropriators not to cut Pell Grant funding.

“We urge the House Committee on Appropriations to reject this raid on Pell Grants and to instead use Pell Grant funds to invest in Pell Grants. Even with the scheduled increase in the maximum Pell Grant to \$5,935, it will cover less than 30 percent of what it costs to attend a public four-year college, the smallest share in more than 40 years. The result: high debt levels and dropout rates by low-income students who cannot afford to complete their degree.

“In addition to raiding Pell Grant funds, the draft House bill attempts again to block implementation of the common-sense gainful employment regulation designed to protect both students and taxpayers from career education programs that over charge and under deliver. TICAS and [more than 50 organizations](#) that advocate for students, veterans, college access and civil rights, as well as [state attorneys general](#) from across the nation, support the gainful employment regulation and strongly oppose any attempt to block its implementation.

“Congress should be making college more affordable and strengthening protections against waste, fraud, and abuse, not obstructing them.”

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An independent, nonprofit organization, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. Our Project on Student Debt works to increase public understanding of rising student debt and the implications for our families, economy, and society. For more information see www.ticas.org or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/TICAS_org](https://twitter.com/TICAS_org).