

March 22, 2023

The Honorable Robert B. Aderholt
Chairman
House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Chair
Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Ranking Member
Senate Subcommittee on Labor, Health
and Human Services, Education, and
Related Agencies

Dear Chairman Aderholt, Chair Baldwin, and Ranking Members DeLauro and Capito,

We, the undersigned 22 organizations, representing a diverse coalition of education associations, civil rights groups, think tanks, researchers, and stakeholders with strong interest in improving college graduation rates, write to express our support for appropriating at least **\$165 million for the Postsecondary Student Success Grants (PSSG) program in Fiscal Year 2024 (FY24)**. We celebrate the support demonstrated for the Postsecondary Student Success Grants (PSSG) program by Congress through the recent funding increase from \$5 million to \$45 million in FY23, which will enable the expansion of evidence-based strategies to improve postsecondary retention and completion rates. **Increasing the investment in PSSG and the inclusion of tiered-evidence report language builds on Congress' prior commitments to get more students through college.**

As we have emerged from the pandemic, college completion rates have stagnated, with larger disparities for students from low-income backgrounds, students of color, first-generation students, and community college students. Increasing college completion offers tremendous promise for increasing social mobility, tackling poverty, strengthening our workforce and economy, and reducing racial and income inequality. There are many strategies for increasing college persistence and completion, and rigorous research demonstrates that college completion initiatives that provide comprehensive and customized supports are highly effective at moving the needle on postsecondary outcomes across a variety of regional and institutional contexts.

Several [comprehensive models](#) of support have emerged, with each backed by an increasingly robust body of evidence. These models include Bottom Line, CUNY ASAP | ACE, InsideTrack, National Institute for Student Success (NISS) at Georgia State University, One Million Degrees, Project QUEST, and Stay the Course. These programs have been evaluated using randomized controlled trials, which are considered the gold standard in program evaluation. The resulting

strong body of evidence shows these models positively affect student outcomes such as persistence, course credit accumulation, and other leading indicators of graduation rates.

We believe **increasing funding for the program to at least \$165 million** will position more higher education institutions – particularly Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority-Serving Institutions (including Hispanic-Serving Institutions), and community colleges – to increase college completion.

We look forward to being of any support through the appropriations process. Thank you for your service in Congress, and for your consideration of this request to invest in research-backed strategies to enhance college completion, narrow equity gaps, and better prepare postsecondary program completers for sustaining-wage careers that lead to a more robust economy.

Sincerely,

American Federation of Teachers

America Forward

Association of Community College Trustees

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Campaign for College Opportunity

Center for Higher Education Policy and Practice (CHEPP)

CUNY ASAP|ACE

InsideTrack

Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)

Los Angeles Regional Food Bank

National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs

New America Higher Education Program

Results for America

State Higher Education Executive Officers Association

Swipe Out Hunger

The California State University

The Education Trust

The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)

Third Way

uAspire

UnidosUS

Young Invincibles