June 6, 2025

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader
U.S. Senate

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
U.S. House of Representatives

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Speaker Johnson, and Leader Jeffries:

On behalf of more than 170 signers representing education advocates, colleges and universities, state higher education executives, workforce development organizations, college access organizations, consumer advocates, civil rights organizations, unions, student loan lenders and servicers, and the business community, we write to urge you to invest in our nation's workforce by fully funding the Pell Grant program and rejecting any proposed eligibility cuts. More than seven million students across the nation rely on Pell Grants to pay for college. Any program or eligibility cuts would increase costs for families and significantly reduce college enrollment and graduation rates.

In January, the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released new supplemental projections for the Pell Grant program showing that absent congressional action, the program will face a $2.7 billion funding shortfall by the end of the current fiscal year (FY25), and a $10.3 billion shortfall by the end of FY26 (the fiscal year currently being debated in Congress). We urge lawmakers to preemptively address this projected funding gap by investing sufficient new mandatory funds to address the shortfall for at least the next two fiscal years, without making any eligibility cuts.

Fully funding the Pell Grant program is one of the smartest, most targeted investments lawmakers can make to fuel economic growth. By making increases to targeted grant aid, lawmakers will reduce student loan borrowing, increase graduation rates, and improve labor market outcomes. The maximum Pell Grant award already covers the lowest share of college costs in the program's history, contributing to a persistent "affordability gap" that forces low- and middle-income students to either take out loans or forgo higher education and training entirely.

In December of 2020, President Trump signed a bipartisan expansion of Pell Grants under the *FAFSA Simplification Act*, which streamlined students' access to financial aid and increased the number of Pell recipients. This historic achievement must be preserved. Addressing the funding shortfall by making eligibility cuts would be short-sighted and damaging to our economic growth.

We strongly urge you to invest in our nation's students and our economic future by fully funding the Pell Grant program and rejecting any proposed cuts to the program.

Sincerely,

10,000 Degrees
AACTE: American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
Achieve Atlanta
ACPA-College Student Educators International

Adoption Network Cleveland
AdvancED Consulting, LLC
AFT, AFL-CIO
Alabama Possible
Alliance for a Better Community
Alray Scholars Program
Alumni of Care Together Improving Outcomes Now (ACTION Ohio)
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Council on Education
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Indian College Fund
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Asian and Pacific Islander American (APIA) Scholars
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT)
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Battle Creek Promise Zone and College Access Network
Benton Harbor Promise Zone Authority
BEST Benzie County Local College Access Network
Better Future Foundation
BLU Educational Foundation
Bottom Line
Breakthrough Central Texas
Cal State Student Association
California Alliance for Student Parent Success
California Competes: Higher Education for a Strong Economy
California EDGE Coalition
Capital Area College Access Network
Center for Higher Education Policy and Practice (CHEPP) at SNHU
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Central Scholarship
Charting Careers
Children Now
Children's Advocacy Institute
COABE
College Access Plan
College AIM
College and Career Access Center of Jackson, Michigan
College Now Greater Cleveland
College Possible
College Success Foundation
CollegeTracks
Columbus State Scholar Network

Community Bridges, Inc.
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Independent Colleges
Crosby Scholars Community Partnership
Crosby Scholars Iredell
Denver Scholarship Foundation
Detroit Regional Dollars for Scholars
DSST Public Schools
Easley Blessed Foundation
ECCO Community Center
EdTrust
EdTrust-West
Education Finance Council
Education Forward Arizona
Education to Employment Partners
EDUCAUSE
Excelencia in Education
FAME - Foundation for the Advancement of Music & Education
Finance Authority of Maine (FAME)
First Generation College Bound
FirstGen Forward
Foster Success
FosterHub
Fostering Academic Achievement Nationwide (FAAN)
Fulfillment Fund
FuturesNW
GenOne
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
GO Public Schools
GRASP (Great Aspirations Scholarship Program)
Great Jobs KC
Green Halo Scholars
Hamilton County JFS
Hamilton County Youth Advisory Board
Heer to Serve
Heights Philadelphia
Higher Education Loan Coalition (HELC)
Higher Education Regional Alliance (HERA)
Hildreth Institute
Hill Country Adventure Therapy
Hispanas Organized for Political Equality (HOPE)
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
I Know I Can
iFoster
Indigenous Education, Inc.
Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)
Iredell County Crosby Scholars Community Partnership

John Burton Advocates for Youth
Just Strategy
KIPP Foundation
Latino U College Access
LeadMN
Lighthouse Youth and Family Services
Los Angeles United Methodist Urban Foundation
Maryland Business Roundtable for Education (MBRT)
Mason County College Access Network and Promise Zone
Michigan League for Public Policy
Missouri College and Career Attainment Network
More Than Bootstraps
NAACP
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of College University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs (NASSGAP)
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA)
National College Attainment Network
National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)
National Council of Higher Education Resources
National Education Association
National Young Farmers Coalition
New America, Higher Education Policy Program
New York Public Interest Research Group
NextGen CA
Niswonger Foundation
NOAR
Noble Network of Charter Schools
Northern California College Promise Coalition
Oceana College Access Network
Ohana Project
Ohio Student Association
On Point for College
One Family
Opt-In Iowa
Overcoming Hurdles in Ohio Youth Advisory Board (OHIO YAB)
Parent Institute for Quality Education
PelotonU
Pennies from Heaven Foundation
Petey Greene Program
Phi Beta Kappa Society
Phi Theta Kappa Foundation
Phi Theta Kappa Honor Society
Philadelphia College Prep Roundtable
Play Right Sports Academy
Public Advocates, Inc.

Ready to Succeed
Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC)
San Antonio Education Partnership
Say Yes Syracuse Scholarship Program (Central New York Community Foundation)
SchoolHouse Connection
Southern California College Attainment Network
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
Students Rising Above
Students United
Swipe Out Hunger
The Campaign for College Opportunity
The Hope Center for Student Basic Needs
The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)
The Scholarship Foundation of St. Louis
Third Way
TN College Access & Success Network
Today's Students Coalition
Toledo Tomorrow
uAspire
Understandingfafsa.org
UnidosUS
UNITE-LA
University of California Student Association (UCSA)
Vickery Meadow Youth Development Foundation
Woodward Hines Education Foundation
Yes We Must Coalition
Young Invincibles
Youth Advisory Board
Youth Law Center

cc:

The Honorable Bill Cassidy, M.D., Chair, Senate HELP Committee
The Honorable Bernie Sanders, Ranking Member, Senate HELP Committee
The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Tim Walberg, Chair, House Committee on Education and Workforce
The Honorable Bobby Scott, Ranking Member, House Committee on Education and Workforce
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chair, House Appropriations Committee
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Appropriations Committee