



*Leadership and Advocacy*

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April 5, 2017

Representative Paul Ryan  
Speaker of the House  
United States House of Representatives  
Room H-305, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Representative Nancy Pelosi  
Minority Leader  
United States House of Representatives  
Room H-204, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Mitch McConnell  
Majority Leader  
United States Senate  
Room S-230, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Chuck Schumer  
Minority Leader  
United States Senate  
Room S-221, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan, Leader Pelosi, Leader McConnell and Leader Schumer:

On behalf of the undersigned associations, we write to encourage you to finalize work on the Fiscal Year 2017 (FY17) appropriations process in the most expedient and least disruptive way. We are greatly concerned about what any additional delays to the appropriations process may mean for critical student aid and research programs. In addition, we strongly oppose the cuts to FY17 appropriated funding proposed by the Administration, which would rashly target Pell Grants, teacher preparation programs and the National Institutes of Health (NIH), among other programs.

As the representatives of colleges and universities, we know how important the federal investment in higher education is. Students depend on financial aid programs to pursue postsecondary education and researchers depend on the competitive grant funding made available to drive the technological innovation that fuels our economy and improves the lives of all of our citizens.

For that reason, we ask you to bundle the remaining appropriations bills that have been previously negotiated with the Defense funding bill passed by the House of Representatives. Such an approach would allow for the restoration of year-round Pell, a proposal with strong bipartisan support in Congress and the support of the Administration. The Senate included language to restore this provision in their FY17 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations bill, and we would ask for its inclusion in any final funding bills.

Further delays in current year funding are likely to have significant impacts on institutional operations. Colleges and universities are in the process of packaging financial aid for new and returning students. At this stage in the process, any reductions in funding for student aid (such as to Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants or Federal Work-Study) could result in millions of students and their families being forced to either find additional money at this late stage in their planning, or forgo their studies entirely. Similarly, uncertainty or delay in research funding can lead to the abandonment of promising lines of discovery.

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We are particularly concerned with the administration's recent request to cut \$18 billion in nondefense discretionary spending as part of their supplemental funding request. The proposed cuts of \$1.3 billion to Pell Grants and over \$1.2 billion to NIH funding, as well as cuts to numerous other programs, would pose real harm, especially occurring this late in the fiscal year. These proposed cuts run counter to the strong bipartisan support for student aid and scientific research Congress has historically demonstrated. The administration has already proposed additional, substantial cuts to these programs for FY18 (amounting to nearly \$10 billion for NIH and Pell alone), which would further compound the damage they face. For these reasons, we urge you to reject the cuts proposed in the Administration's supplemental request.

We appreciate your attention to our concerns and your efforts on behalf of America's colleges and universities. We look forward to working with you and the members of the Appropriations committees to enact funding legislation that preserves and protects key investments in students and researchers.

Sincerely,



Molly Corbett Broad

CC: Rep. Rodney Frelinghuysen, Rep. Nita Lowey, Sen. Thad Cochran and Sen. Patrick Leahy

On behalf of:

ACPA - College Student Educators International  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Association of University Professors  
American Council on Education  
American Dental Education Association  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium  
Association of American Colleges & Universities  
Association of American Universities  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
Association of Community College Trustees  
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges  
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities  
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities  
Association of Research Libraries  
Council of Graduate Schools  
Council of Independent Colleges  
Council for Christian Colleges and Universities  
Council for Opportunity in Education  
Educational Testing Service

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### EDUCAUSE

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities

NAFSA - Association of International Educators

NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education

National Association for College Admission Counseling

National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education

National Association of College and University Business Officers

National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

National Association of System Heads

National Council of University Research Administrators