



February 25, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi and Minority Leader McCarthy:

As the House of Representatives moves to consider the reconciliation package on the floor, we write on behalf of America's colleges and universities to express our strong support for this measure.

We are particularly appreciative that nearly \$40 billion is included in the legislation for students and institutions. While this amount falls short of our most recent estimate of at least \$97 billion in student and institutional needs (and is far less than the \$183 billion identified in a recent independent estimate¹) it represents the largest federal effort so far to address the crippling impact of the pandemic on colleges and universities.

This legislation also continues to provide additional dedicated support to Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) to address the disproportionate effect of the pandemic on those institutions and their students. This is a critical step in the effort to tackle historic funding inequities for these schools, a gap only exacerbated by the pandemic.

In addition, the bill contains a provision amending the current 90/10 rule to close an existing loophole that didn't categorize federal programs for active duty military and veterans' education benefits as federal funding. We have long supported closing this loophole in order to ensure that the rule works as intended.

Finally, earlier versions of the bill included specific language providing institutions the sole authority to determine student eligibility for emergency aid. We understand that the language raised technical issues related to the reconciliation process and had to be removed, but we appreciate the clear expression of support for those students. We strongly believe that the Department of Education already has sufficient authority to ensure that all students harmed by the pandemic are able to receive the help they need.

We urge the House to pass this measure as quickly as possible so that needed relief funds reach students and institutions in a timely manner. Thank you again for your support.

¹ See *How to Fight COVID's Financial Crush* (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/how-to-fight-covids-financial-crush>)

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ted Mitchell".

Ted Mitchell
President

On behalf of:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
ACPA-College Student Educators International
ACT
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of the Colleges of Nursing
American Association of University Professors
American College Health Association
American Council on Education
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
APPA, "Leadership in Educational Facilities"
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Pennsylvania
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
Common App
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
EDUCAUSE
ETS
Higher Education Loan Coalition
Higher Learning Commission

Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
International Association of Campus Law Enforcement Administrators
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of University Research Administrators
New England Commission of Higher Education
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
Phi Beta Kappa Society
SACSCOC
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
UPCEA
WASC Senior College & University Commission