

May 29, 2020

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
317 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
322 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leader McConnell and Minority Leader Schumer,

On behalf of the organizations listed below, we express our appreciation for the financial support provided to postsecondary students and institutions in the several enacted supplemental appropriations acts. As you consider next steps to help America recover from the novel coronavirus pandemic, we write to reiterate our request for the additional support outlined in our April 9 letter¹.

As you are well aware, institutions of higher education, their students, and faculty and staff continue to face unprecedented challenges as a result of the pandemic, including dealing with shuttered campuses and the rapid transition to online learning, as well as an unwavering commitment to ensuring the health and safety of their entire communities. During the second half of the current school year, our institutions lost billions of dollars beyond the \$14 billion appropriation for students and institutions in the CARES Act. Still, we are deeply grateful that Congress provided those emergency resources. This lifeline enabled colleges and universities to assist their most vulnerable students and address immediate needs related to the effects of the pandemic on our campuses.

In the April 9 letter we detailed our request for \$46.6 billion to help address near-term campus financial needs, including increased need-based aid for students due to declining family incomes, and revenue losses stemming from enrollment declines and closures of campus facilities that provide auxiliary services.

As we look to summer and the 2020-21 school year, we expect even greater losses. Recent surveys conducted by several higher education associations indicate that the \$46.6 billion estimate is far lower than the actual impact will be. For example, in one such survey three-quarters of institutions reported total current-year revenue losses of up to 20 percent, while a smaller percentage, roughly 5 percent, reported even higher losses. The outlook is worse for the upcoming year. Many more institutions believe their losses next year will exceed 20 percent.

As referenced in our April 9 letter, we firmly believe that direct distribution to institutions is the best way to ensure that federal funds actually reach the students and schools they were

¹ The letter can be found at: <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Letter-House-Higher-Ed-Supplemental-Request-040920.pdf>. Underlying assumptions and data used in the letter can be found here: <https://www.acenet.edu/Documents/Higher-Education-Recommendations-4th-Supplemental-Assumptions-040920.pdf>.

intended to help. While we share many of Congress's concerns regarding the implementation of the CARES Act, it is equally clear that using the existing federal system for providing aid to institutions is the fastest way to get support to where it is needed. By pairing this rapid disbursement of funds with statutory language that gives campuses broad flexibility and authority to use funds in ways that best match the unique needs of students and their institutions, Congress can bypass the kinds of bureaucratic limitations that hampered the effectiveness of some CARES aid. The language included in the HEROES Act effectively addressed this issue, and we recommend its inclusion in any future supplemental legislation.

Unfortunately, federal support for higher education has historically been used by states to supplement other areas of state budgets, leaving higher education vulnerable to massive cuts in state support and students vulnerable to tuition increases. In order to guarantee that states do not simply reduce their funding to institutions of higher education in proportion to new federal assistance, Congress must include a maintenance of effort (MOE) provision as a condition of receiving funding. No state should be allowed to cut higher education disproportionately to cuts in its overall budget. Furthermore, it's critical to include an expansive definition of "higher education" that includes direct support to institutions and state student financial aid programs.

Colleges and universities employ nearly 4 million people nationwide, and are already struggling to maintain their faculty and staff. Some campuses have closed, others have declared financial exigency, and many have furloughed employees and cut budgets further. In addition to massive increases in expenses and precipitous declines in revenues, institutions are now experiencing the effects of cuts to state higher education budgets, which will only get much worse. Additional emergency aid is critical to stabilize institutions financially and support students who will come to campus this fall with substantial unmet need. Losses of the magnitude we expect to see in the fall would necessarily weaken not just colleges and universities, but the economic health of their surrounding communities and regions.

We appreciate your understanding of the substantial needs our institutions have and thank you for the support Congress has already provided to higher education through the CARES Act and other legislation. We are requesting our members understand the federal government cannot fully address all of their existing needs, and we are not asking you to do so. Rather, the \$46.6 billion we are requesting will serve as a lifeline for students and campuses into the fall. We are proud of the innovative measures already underway as campuses strive to serve their students under these unparalleled circumstances and with limited resources, but there is only so much that can be done without additional federal support, given the scope of the crisis institutions are facing.

For these reasons, we look forward to working with you to ensure that this critical funding is included in the legislation you will be considering.

Higher Education Supplemental Request
May 29, 2020

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell
President

On behalf of:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges
Achieving the Dream
American Association of Colleges Nursing
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 University Professors
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
APPA, Leadership in Educational Facilities
Associated Colleges of the Midwest
Association for Biblical Higher Education
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Universities
Association of California Colleges and Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Chiropractic Colleges
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in New Jersey
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Pennsylvania
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Coalition of Urban and Metropolitan Universities
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources
Common App
Connecticut Conference of Independent Colleges
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Council for Higher Education Accreditation

Higher Education Supplemental Request
May 29, 2020

Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia
Council of Regional Accrediting Commissions
Council on Social Work Education
Council of Independent Nebraska Colleges Foundation
EDUCAUSE
ETS
Georgia Independent College Association
Great Lakes Colleges Association
Higher Learning Commission
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida
Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri
Independent Colleges of Washington
Independent Colleges of Indiana
Kansas Independent College Association
Louisiana Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Maryland Independent College and University Association
Michigan Independent Colleges & Universities
Minnesota Private College Council
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Schools and Colleges of the United Methodist Church
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association of System Heads
National Collegiate Athletic Association
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
Network of Colleges and Universities, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
New England Commission of Higher Education
North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
Online Learning Consortium
Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges & Universities
Phi Beta Kappa Society
Quality Matters
Rebuilding America's Middle Class
Tennessee Independent Colleges and Universities Assoc.
UNCF (United Negro College Fund, Inc.)
UPCEA
WASC Senior College & University Commission
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Yes We Must Coalition