



The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Education, and Related
Agencies
Washington DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education & Related Agencies
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor,
Health and Human Services, Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education & Related Agencies
Washington DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Ranking Member Blunt, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole:

The Today's Student Coalition (TSC) respectfully requests the following funding levels within the Fiscal Year (FY) 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS) appropriations bill. The TSC — a collective of 34 cross-cutting higher education policy, advocacy, and membership organizations — appreciates the steps that federal policymakers have taken to support students through the pandemic. Yet, as our nation looks to turn the corner and begin the process of rebuilding our economy for a post-pandemic world, federal investments must continue to enhance the capacities of postsecondary institutions while ensuring student access to the support necessary for success in higher education.

As you begin to work on FY 2023 appropriations legislation, the TSC would like to express our support for investments in the key child care, financial aid/support, and campus mental health programs outlined below. As our coalition strives to create a system of higher education that better reflects and supports the needs of today's students, we believe that investments in these programs represent a chance to not merely repair the damage caused by the pandemic, but to provide real educational and economic opportunity to all.

- **Emergency Aid Grants:** Create a permanent Emergency Aid Grant program to provide grants to institutions with the explicit purpose of providing direct student emergency financial aid. This funding would allow institutions to provide direct financial assistance to ensure an emergency cost does not derail a student's ability to complete college, similar to the assistance provided to students through the Higher Education Emergency Relief Fund (HEERF).

An emergency financial aid grant can help students cover any unexpected expenses so these emergencies do not suspend or halt their education. The Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act and the two other subsequent COVID-19 aid packages provided resources for institutions of higher education to provide financial support in the form of emergency aid grants for students related to the pandemic. This aid enabled millions of students to stay in school despite the increased costs of living through the pandemic in a postsecondary environment. This authority proved that even a relatively small amount of financial aid can ensure students have a chance to stay in school.

- **Pell Grants:** Pell Grants have served as the cornerstone of federal financial aid for students from low-income backgrounds, providing crucial support for roughly 7 million students each year. We urge Congress to consider a significant increase in the maximum Pell Grant award in both discretionary and mandatory funding - continuing the trajectory towards a full doubling of the maximum award amount in the coming years.
- **Child Care Access Means Parents in School:** Increase funding to \$500 million for the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS)—the amount needed to provide child care support to about six percent of Pell-eligible student parents of children ages 0-5. The CCAMPIS program provides vital support for the participation and success of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of campus-based child care, widely recognized as one of the most important supports for parenting college students. Increasing CCAMPIS funding to \$500 million would ensure that roughly 100,000 more parenting college students receive the child care assistance they need to continue their educational journeys.
- **Garrett Lee Smith Memorial Act Campus Suicide Prevention Grant:** Finally, increase the Garrett Lee Smith Campus Suicide Prevention Grant (GLS CSPG) to \$15 million, as this funding did not receive an increase in the FY 22 package.

In June 2020, data from the CDC showed that more than half of adults aged 18-24 had at least one adverse mental or behavioral health symptom, with more than a quarter considering suicide in the past 30 days. The GLS CSPG provides vital funding in colleges' efforts to not only address the unique needs of students experiencing mental health challenges or contemplating suicide, but support them in reaching their academic goals. As the mental health challenges on college campuses have grown, funding for this important program has become even more critical.

As you consider programmatic funding levels for FY 2023 appropriations, we urge you to reaffirm Congress's historic, bipartisan commitment to postsecondary education and to today's students. Thank you for the consideration of important requests. We look forward to continued work with you to advance programmatic funding that meets the needs of our students and the nation as a whole.

Sincerely,

The Today's Students Coalition

Higher Learning Advocates
 Achieving the Dream
 Advance Vermont
 America Forward
 Association of Young Americans
 Center for First-generation Student Success
 Coalition on Adult Basic Education
 Cornell University Student Assembly
 Institute for Higher Education Policy
 The Jed Foundation
 Jobs for the Future
 Let's Get Ready
 National Association of Student Personnel
 Administrators

National College Attainment Network
 National Skills Coalition
 New America Higher Education Program
 Student Veterans of America
 Swipe Out Hunger
 uAspire
 University of California Student Association
 University Professional and Continuing Education
 Association
 Veterans Education Success
 Young Invincibles