



November 15, 2023

The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
H-232, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Democratic Leader
United States House of Representatives
H-204, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson and Democratic Leader Jeffries:

The Student Aid Alliance (SAA) is a coalition of over 40 higher education organizations united in our support for the federal student aid programs in the *Higher Education Act of 1965*. The federal student aid programs that we advocate for include the following:

- Federal Pell Grant Program;
- Federal Work-Study (FWS);
- Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG);
- Federal TRIO programs;
- Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP);
- and
- Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN).

On behalf of the SAA, we write to express our strong opposition to the fiscal year (FY) 2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies funding bill that is expected to be voted on this week. We oppose the overall drastic funding cuts and the elimination of funding for FWS and SEOG that would impact over 600,000 students and over 1.6 million students respectively. Together with a Pell Grant, these two programs provide access to college for millions of low-income students nationwide.

We appreciate that the Pell Grant maximum was not cut, and that the Pell Grant reserve was maintained. However, if enacted, this would be the first year Congress did not provide an increase in this program since 2012. While Federal TRIO programs and GEAR UP were level-funded, level-funding does, in fact, represent a cut to these programs.

We are also opposed to the defunding of any other student aid program, to include GAANN, and any amendment that will further restrict student aid funding from students. We offer support for amendments that increase or restore funding for these critical student aid programs because these funds directly impact the future success of our low-income students.

As we have done before, we call on Congress to continue its bipartisan support of federal student aid programs. These programs play a vital role by providing a much-needed investment in our future leaders.

Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

SAA Steering Committee



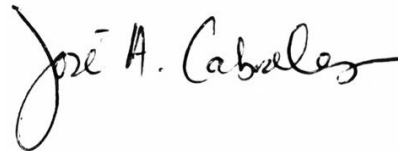
Mark Becker
President, Association of Public and
Land-grant Universities



Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D.
President and CEO, American Association of
Community Colleges



Justin Draeger
President, National Association of Student
Financial Aid Administrators



Dr. José A. Cabrales
Executive in Charge, American Association of
State Colleges and Universities



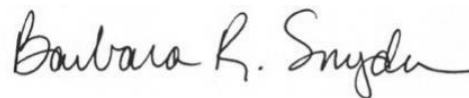
Kimberly Jones
President, Council for Opportunity in
Education



Barbara K. Mistick
President, National Association of
Independent Colleges & Universities



Ted Mitchell
President, American Council on Education



Barbara R. Snyder
President, Association of American
Universities