

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 21, 2026

The Honorable Shelly Moore Capito, Chair
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations
S-128 United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin, Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, and Education Appropriations
S-146A United States Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairwoman Capito and Ranking Member Baldwin,

We write to thank you for your strong support of the Federal TRIO Programs (“TRIO”) and to request that you continue to prioritize these programs and provide robust funding in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. A complement to federal financial aid, TRIO promotes postsecondary access, retention, and completion for low-income, first-generation students.

Nearly 3,400 TRIO programs provide support in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the Pacific Islands and Puerto Rico at over 1,000 colleges, universities, and community-based agencies. These programs help approximately 817,000 students prepare for, enter, and graduate from college each year. Increased funding will allow even more students to benefit from the academic, financial, and social supports provided by these programs. TRIO’s individualized tutoring, counseling, academic advising, and other services are critical to the success of low-income, first-generation students attaining a higher education. This, in turn, leads to higher rates of employment and compensation for TRIO graduates – a boon to local economies as program participants are transformed into taxpayers who help their communities thrive.

We are proud that TRIO serves learners from as young as the sixth grade through adult learners and includes specialized programming for military veterans. Since their inception in 1964, TRIO programs have produced over 6 million college graduates. Research shows that college graduates have lower unemployment rates and pay more in federal taxes (College Board, *Education Pays 2023*). Over the course of a lifetime, bachelor’s degree recipients will earn \$1 million more than a high school graduate and graduate degree recipients will earn \$1.7 million more, even after accounting for the cost of higher education and delayed entry into the workforce. The collective increase from those who attained postsecondary degrees in 2010 through 2020 will yield \$14.2 trillion in net earnings over the rest of their lifetimes, thereby infusing the economy through both spending and tax revenue (Georgetown Center for Education and the Workforce, *Learning and Earning by Degrees*, 2024).

TRIO is comprised of seven student-facing programs including Talent Search, which provides college exposure to middle and high school students; Upward Bound and Upward Bound Math-Science, which provide intense pre-college preparation through academic and experiential learning for high school students, with the latter emphasizing STEM education; and Veterans Upward Bound, which helps military veterans leverage their earned education benefits and prepare for postsecondary education. The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement (“McNair”) program prepares undergraduates to pursue doctoral degrees. Educational Opportunities Centers (“EOC”) assist unemployed and low-income adults in re-entering the education pipeline. The largest TRIO program, Student Support Services (“SSS”), is the only national program providing college retention and completion supports for low-income, first-generation students as well as students with disabilities.

As all TRIO programs must compete for funding every five years, the FY27 appropriations legislation will directly impact the number and size of the Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math-Science, Veterans

Upward Bound and McNair grants awarded in the pending FY27 grant competitions. These programs have a strong record of success. Upward Bound students, including those in the Upward Bound Math-Science programs, are more than twice as likely to earn a bachelor's degree by age 24 than students in the lowest income quartile. Veterans Upward Bound students are 42% more likely than other low-income veterans to earn an associate or bachelor's degree. McNair students are 52% more likely to enroll in graduate school than college graduates in the bottom income quartile.

We appreciate the Subcommittee's continued commitment to TRIO. Given the programs' proven success and impact on our nation's economy, we respectfully request your support of robust funding in FY27.

Sincerely,

Sincerely,



Raphael Warnock
United States Senator



Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator



Angela D. Alsobrooks
United States Senator



Lisa Blunt Rochester
United States Senator



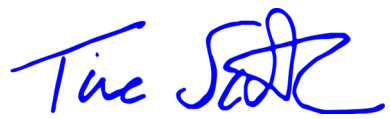
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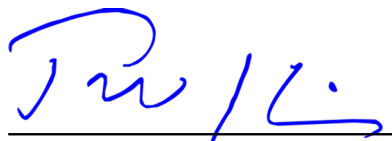
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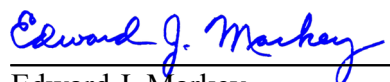
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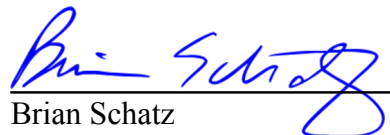
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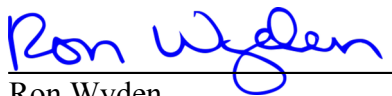
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United States Senator



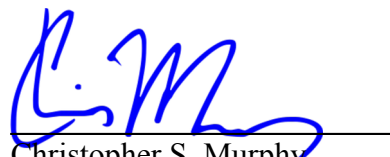
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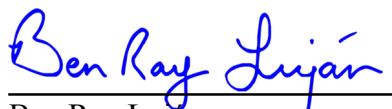
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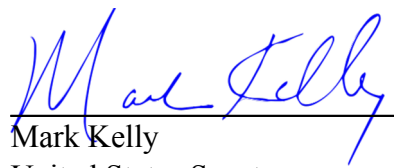

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