



THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

January 23, 2019

CALIFORNIA CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU) and the California Community Colleges (CCC), as well as the nearly 2.9 million students our institutions serve, we extend our best wishes to you and your staff as you begin your work in the 116th Congress.

California's commitment to public higher education ensures that all Californians have access to high-quality and affordable education and training opportunities. Together, our institutions represent the largest system of higher education in the nation. Our most visible work involves educating the next-generation workforce and fostering future entrepreneurs and inventors; however, our joint mission extends far beyond the classroom. Every day, our institutions conduct groundbreaking research that shapes California's response to wildfires, drought, emerging diseases, and technological challenges. In traditional classroom settings and through emerging learning techniques, our systems provide opportunities for traditional and non-traditional students alike to gain the knowledge and skills necessary to thrive in the global economy. The graduates, inventions, and spinoff companies—and high-tech industries—that emerge from California's public higher education system drive the innovation economy in our state and the nation.

Ensuring that California's public higher education system provides opportunity for all students, regardless of background or income, and continues to be a global innovation leader is paramount to our state's growth and continued prosperity. The success of our state's higher education system is due in large part to the strong relationships we have with our state and federal partners, whose support for student aid, university research, and health care services allows us to continue to serve Californians. In turn, we recognize the importance of a meaningful federal oversight structure that assures institutional accountability and student protection.

Our institutions' research is supported by the access to data and competitive grants provided by federal agencies, which enable educators and students to conduct cutting-edge research and eligible students to earn income through Federal Work-Study. Continued support for key data sharing and research agencies, such as the National Center for Education Statistics, the National Institutes of Health, and the National Science Foundation, allows our researchers to continue to pursue critical solutions to the challenges facing our colleges and our world.

Federal workforce programs—including those that foster the preparation of the largest annual cohort of K-12 teachers in the state—are key to supporting the pipeline of students that continue to help our institutions and our state thrive.

At the core of the upward mobility that higher education provides, however, is the federal student aid that—in combination with State support—provides our students with the means to attend and succeed at institutions of higher education, regardless of family income.

A new Congress allows us to approach the future with a fresh perspective. When considering the federal initiatives that would be most helpful to furthering our mission of public service and supporting our students through their academic pursuits, we encourage you to consider the following:

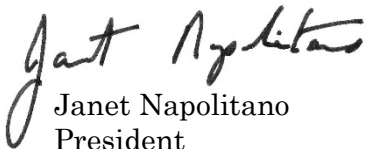
- **Enhancing the Federal Pell Grant Program.** Pell Grants are specifically intended to benefit low-income students, and provide key support to hundreds of thousands at all three of our systems. By increasing and indexing the Pell Grant to inflation, as well as permitting the use of remaining eligibility for graduate studies, Congress can begin to reverse decades of erosion to a program of unparalleled importance to students in California and across the nation.
- **Strengthening Campus-Based Aid Programs.** In addition to the Pell Grant, federal student aid such as the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant, Work-Study and Perkins Loan provide the most financially-vulnerable students with additional support in obtaining their degree. These programs are administered at the campus level, giving campus financial aid offices some flexibility in administering this supplemental aid. Reauthorizing Perkins Loans and increasing funding for existing campus-based aid programs would dramatically improve the affordability of higher education across our systems and throughout the country.
- **Investing in Pipeline Programs.** While many of our priorities center on the education a student receives while attending our institutions, the value that K-12 pipeline programs bring to higher education cannot be overstated. The federal GEAR UP and TRIO programs bring students from underserved communities into an environment that fosters academic achievement and reduces the barriers to entry to postsecondary education. Increased investments in these programs will ensure that more students who are eligible for GEAR UP and TRIO have access to quality programming oriented toward prospective students' success in higher education.
- **Support for Undocumented Students.** California has long recognized the economic and societal contributions of our undocumented immigrant community and has worked to provide undocumented students with access to the state's public higher education systems. The Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) program enabled these Dreamers to study and live without fear of deportation. Immediate and permanent action should be taken to preserve the DACA program and work toward comprehensive immigration reform that provides a pathway to citizenship for Dreamer students.

- **Renewing Expiring Mandatory Funding for Minority-Serving Institutions.**
Our systems reflect California's tremendous diversity, and many of our institutions are designated as Hispanic-Serving (HSI) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving (AANAPISI). Since FY 2008 a significant percentage of competitive grant funding for HSI, AANAPISI and other Minority-Serving Institutions came from a mandatory stream that greatly supplemented annual discretionary appropriations. In recent years, over 40 percent of HSI grants and over 55 percent of AANAPISI grants have come from mandatory funds. These grants are used to increase the number of students attaining STEM degrees and build capacity to serve all students, which helps close completion and equity gaps. The mandatory money—totaling \$255 million per year—expires after FY 2019. Renewing and increasing this funding will further enhance our graduation efforts.

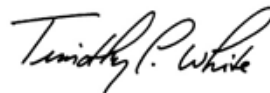
We hope to serve as resources to your office as you consider important federal programs and national issues that affect higher education. If you have any questions about our institutions or the work we do in your district, please contact our federal governmental relations staff. At UC, you can reach Chris Harrington at Chris.Harrington@ucdc.edu and (202) 974-6314; at CSU, you can reach Jim Gelb at JGelb@calstate.edu, and (202) 434-8060; and at CCC, you can reach Laura Metune at LMetune@cccco.edu and (916) 323-5951.

Again, we wish you all the best as you work on the many important issues facing our nation.

Sincerely,



Janet Napolitano
President
University of California



Timothy P. White
Chancellor
California State University



Eloy Ortiz Oakley
Chancellor
California Community Colleges