



THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

July 24, 2023

## 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), and the approximately 2.5 million students our institutions serve, we write to express our concerns with the proposed cuts contained in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations bill. Specifically, we are strongly opposed to the elimination of funding for the Federal Work-Study (FWS), the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG) and the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) programs.

The FSEOG and FWS programs work together with Pell Grants to provide low-income students with a manageable balance of grants and experiential work opportunities to help pay for college. These programs were created as an incentive for institutions to partner with the federal government to support qualified low-income, first-generation students attending college. Additionally, the CCAMPIS program—a critical component to ensuring that low-income student-parents have access to reliable and affordable campus-based child-care services—allows parents to pursue higher education while raising young children.

California's commitment to public higher education ensures that all Californians have access to high-quality and affordable education and training opportunities. In traditional classroom settings and through emerging learning technologies, our systems provide opportunities for traditional and non-traditional students alike to gain the skills necessary to thrive in the global economy. Together, our 149 institutions represent the largest systems of higher education in the nation, our most visible work involves educating the next-generation workforce. Not only do we provide a critical onramp to good paying jobs, but the return on investment is far reaching. For every \$1 invested in students, the students will gain \$5 in higher future earnings. Equally important, our institutions have an annual economic impact of more than \$226 billion to the state of California. Simply put, investing in our students and our institutions translates into the success of our state.

We recognize that these are difficult budget times. However, the FWS, FSEOG and CCAMPIS programs are all critical to our institutions' ability to stretch institutional aid further, helping even more students find a debt-free path to a degree. At the core of the upward mobility that higher education provides is the federal student aid that—in combination with state and

institutional support—provides students with the means to attend and succeed at these institutions. When students graduate with enormous amounts of debt, it is barrier to achieving the American dream, attending graduate school, purchasing a home, starting a family or making other significant investments in our economy. Therefore, we respectfully request that you reject these program eliminations and support any effort to restore funding for these programs.

Finally, we ask that you work to increase the maximum Pell Grant award for the coming year. We appreciate that current funding for this program was maintained in the Committee bill. We appreciate that the Pell Grant maximum was not cut, and the Pell Grant surplus was preserved. However, if enacted, this would be the first year Congress did not provide an increase in this program since 2012. Pell funding is vital in our efforts to attract, retain, and most importantly graduate students from low-income and first-generation backgrounds. Without robust Pell funding, it becomes far more difficult for these students to complete a postsecondary education and become meaningful participants in growing California's economy.

Ensuring that California's public higher education system provides an opportunity for all students, regardless of background or income, and continues to be a global innovation leader, is paramount to the growth and prosperity of our state and nation. We thank you for considering our request. If you have any questions about this letter or the work of our institutions, please contact us. At UC, contact Chris Harrington ([Chris.Harrington@ucdc.edu](mailto:Chris.Harrington@ucdc.edu), 202-974-6314); at CSU, contact George Conant ([gconant@calstate.edu](mailto:gconant@calstate.edu), 202-365-5669); and at CCC, contact Linda Vazquez ([lvazquez@cccco.edu](mailto:lvazquez@cccco.edu), 714-824-1802).

Sincerely,



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