

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harold (Hal) Rogers
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-307, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita M. Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
2467 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa L. DeLauro
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, Education and
Related Agencies
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

March 26, 2015

Dear Chairman Rogers, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Cole and Ranking Member DeLauro,

Since 1972, the need-based Federal Pell Grant program has served as a cornerstone in college accessibility for our nation's students. At the beginning of the program, the grant covered the entire cost of college and offered the opportunity to succeed to every willing student. In 2008, the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) was enacted into law and was a historic win in increasing college access to students and institutions of higher education everywhere. It was in this law that a new provision allowed students to receive an additional Pell Grant award for attending school beyond the traditional two-semesters. This additional Pell award became known to many as the "year-round Pell Grant."

Implemented in 2010, the year-round Pell Grant benefitted 1.2 million college students across the country. This allowed students who had already expended their maximum Pell Grant award the opportunity to receive funding for additional courses. To qualify, students were required to be enrolled on at least a half-time basis in a program longer than one academic year in length. Additionally, they had to have received 100% of the first scheduled award during the academic year. The program permitted students to maintain progress in their education, offered greater accessibility for community college students to transfer to four-year colleges, and allowed students to advance further in their degrees towards graduation.

However, the year-round Pell Grant was short-lived and eliminated in the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2011. This critical provision was eliminated without a vote in committee,

with no research, and no hearings. We agree that difficult decisions must be made in order to guarantee this country's economic prosperity but access to higher education is non-negotiable.

Since 2010, Pell Grants have declined and are projected to remain level over the next ten years. As tuition costs soar and colleges and universities budgets are slashed, the Pell Grant now covers just a third of the cost of a public-four year school. Leaving today's student fight to make ends meet while being saddled with debt for the future. In our changing economy, today's college student is not necessarily between the ages of 18-22, full-time, or finishing their degree in four years. Students need flexibility to manage work schedules and personal responsibilities; and we believe that restoring the year-round Pell Grant can put us back on track to offering that opportunity to all our students.

Thus, we respectfully request that the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Subcommittee mark to reinstate access to year-round Pell Grants so that we can continue to increase college accessibility. Thank you for your time and consideration in offering our nation's students and families a chance to succeed.

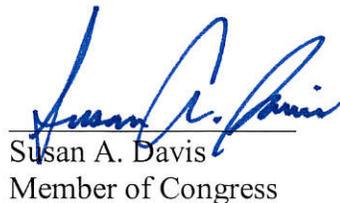
Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



Rubén Hinojosa
Member of Congress



Susan A. Davis
Member of Congress



Ron Kind
Member of Congress



Frederica S. Wilson
Member of Congress



Jared Huffman
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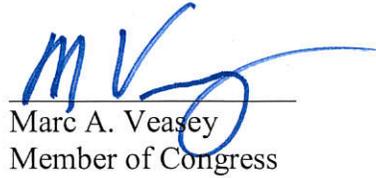
Mark DeSaulnier
Member of Congress

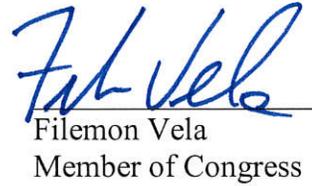


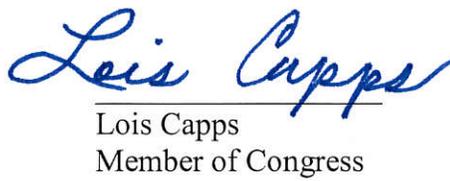
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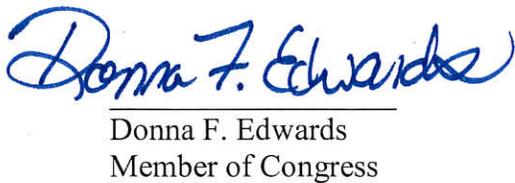

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Marc A. Veasey
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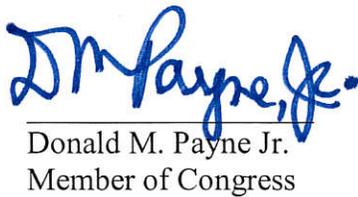

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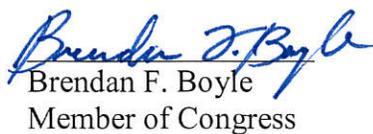

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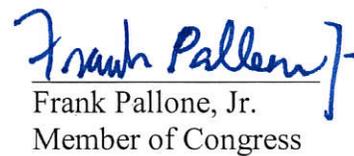

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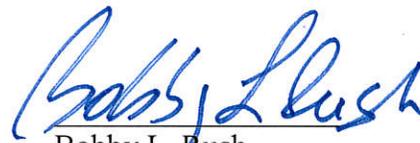

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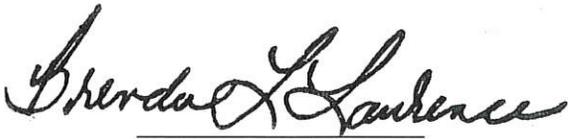

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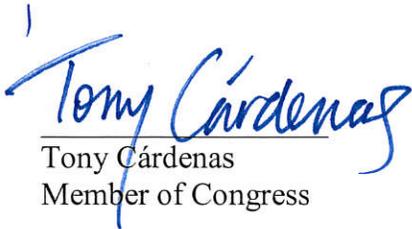

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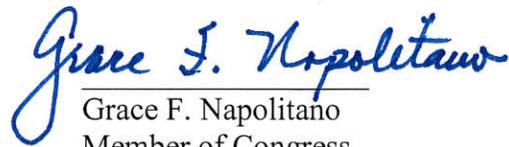
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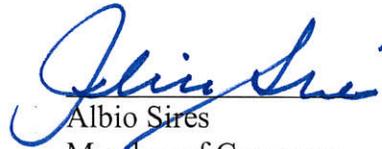
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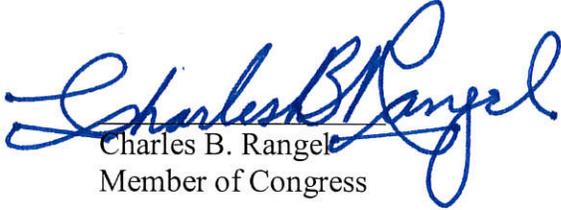
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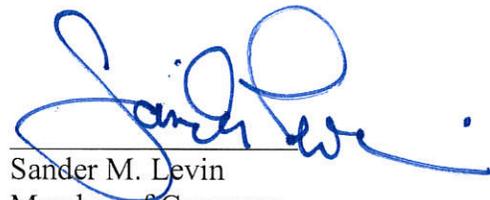
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