



April 7, 2025

The Honorable Linda McMahon
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon:

I write on behalf of the American Council on Education (ACE) and the undersigned organizations to ask that the Department of Education (Department) implements the fiscal year (FY) 2025 continuing resolution, which includes funding levels for the federal student aid programs and other Higher Education Act programs, at the FY 2024 funding levels as intended by Congress.¹ We also request that the Department formally confirm that all higher education programs will be funded at FY 2024 levels.

On March 14, campuses received a communication from acting Under Secretary James Bergeron providing reassurance that funds would continue to flow normally and that program operations would not be disrupted.² While this is not a binding commitment, it sends a message to campuses that current arrangements are to be continued.

Regarding federal student aid, institutions are already packaging aid for the 2025-26 award year and need to be certain of the Pell Grant maximum award. Without this information, incoming freshmen cannot make enrollment decisions for the fall, and returning students cannot be assured their aid will continue. This is particularly important given the chaos created during the delayed implementation of the new FAFSA at the beginning of the current award cycle. We acknowledge and appreciate the recent announcement by the Department indicating that the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant and Federal Work Study will be funded at FY 2024 levels and want to further reiterate the importance of providing these assurances for all student aid programs.³

Additionally, institutions have been operating under the assumption that they would have access to the same level of federal grant funding as in FY 2024.⁴ Institutions are in varying stages of the grant-making process, either as new applicants or managing current grants already approved by the Department. Changing course this far into the fiscal year would substantially impair the ability of colleges to provide the needed program support. For example, TRIO administrators have remained employed assuming the continuation of funding; institutions such as Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Hispanic-Serving Institutions are counting on continuing

¹ A copy of the FY 2024 budget tables included in the explanatory statement for postsecondary education can be located at the following link beginning on page 957: <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CPRT-118HPRT55008/pdf/CPRT-118HPRT55008.pdf>

² Bergeron, J. (2025, March 14). *Letter to education stakeholders*. <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/sites/default/files/2025-03/ActingUnderSecretaryJamesBergeronLettertoEducationStakeholdersMarch142025.pdf>

³ Federal Student Aid. (2025, April 3). *2025-26 final funding authorizations for the campus-based programs*. <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2025-03-31/2025-26-final-funding-authorizations-campus-based-programs-updated-april-3-2025>

⁴ Because Congress has passed three CRs since last September, institutions have been operating in FY 2024 funding levels.

allocations; and many community colleges are preparing to apply for essential Strengthening Institutions Program grants.

With FY 2025 more than half over, it is critical that the Department provide funding for the current fiscal year that is consistent with FY 2024, as intended by Congress. We appreciate your attention to this matter and are eager to work with you and the Department to address this request.

Sincerely,



Ted Mitchell
President

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
American Association of Community Colleges
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
Association of American Universities
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
NASPA – Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Higher Education Systems
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
Thurgood Marshall College Fund
UNCF

Cc:

The Honorable Susan Collins, Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Patty Murray, Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman, House Committee on Appropriations
The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member, House Committee on Appropriations