



Kristen F. Soares, President

March 21, 2020

The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
U.S. Senator
331 Hart Senate Office Building.
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kamala Harris
U.S. Senator
112 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Subject: Request for Support for Colleges, Universities, and Students

Dear Senators Feinstein and Harris:

On behalf of the Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities (AICCU), I urge you to extend federal financial support to colleges and universities in our state and across the nation, as well as the students that we serve. AICCU is the organizational voice for over 80 independent, nonprofit higher education institutions in our state and, together, they educate approximately 380,000 students. Our institutions—and their students—need your support during this national emergency.

Colleges across the state and country are feeling immense economic pressures. As nonprofit organizations, our independent institutions do not have state funding to fall back on, and we must rely on tight annual budgets. Institutions are already experiencing revenue losses in the millions of dollars as a result of this crisis. As the Senate responds to the financial needs of Americans and different sectors of the economy, I urge you to consider the following proposals to help support higher education:

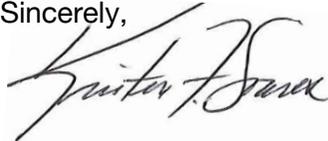
1. **Emergency grant funds for students:** Congress should provide emergency grant funds to colleges to help students with financial need pay for emergency necessities such as transportation, food, and relocation assistance. **Estimate of total national need is \$8 billion.**
2. **Technology assistance:** Students and institutions need financial assistance with costs associated with moving to distance education instruction to ensure students can continue their education. **Estimate of total national need is \$8 billion.**
3. **Grants or zero-interest federal loans for institutions:** Broad-based federal support is needed to assist institutions with lost revenue and increased costs associated with the response to COVID-19, including the loss of room and board revenue and the costs associated with moving students home. **Estimate of total national need nonprofit colleges is \$10 billion.**

4. **Relaxation of reporting and audit requirements, including temporary suspension of the federal financial responsibility system:** Colleges are facing both a substantial increase in costs and a potentially devastating decline in revenues. Additionally, the volatility on Wall Street means a potential decline in the values of the endowments of college and universities. As a result, many institutions will fail the annual federal financial responsibility ratios—ratios that only apply to nonprofit colleges and universities. Failing these ratios could have dire consequences for students and institutions. Those consequences include losing authority for students who live out of state to access distance education classes, forcing colleges to buy expensive letters of credit, and having negative effects on private credit lines.

Higher education institutions are often the economic drivers in their communities, employing hundreds, if not thousands of people, and supporting the businesses around them. Nonprofit colleges and universities provide regional access for their diverse students, especially First Generation students and those that are home-bound. They educate the workforce on which our state depends to sustain California's dynamic economy.

I hope you will consider favorably the recommend proposals outlined above to help our institution, students, and campus community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kristen F. Soares". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "K".

Kristen F. Soares