March 22, 2023

The Honorable Sean Casten
2440 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Susie Lee
365 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Casten and Lee:

The undersigned organizations write to express our strong support for the Pell Grant Sustainability Act.

The federal Pell Grant program, which provides need-based grant aid to low- and moderate-income students to help cover college costs, is the federal government’s most effective investment in college affordability. Pell Grants boost college enrollment, help accelerate graduation, improve student outcomes, and improve college graduation rates.

However, the share of college costs covered by the grant is at an all-time low. At its peak in 1975-76, the maximum Pell Grant covered more than three-quarters of the cost of attending a four-year public college. The 2023-24 maximum award amount covers just 26% of that cost. Unsurprisingly, Pell Grant recipients continue to bear disproportionate student debt burdens.

The grant is also at annual risk of losing value year-over-year, as it is not automatically adjusted for inflation. The Pell Grant Sustainability Act would fix this by permanently restoring the grant’s automatic annual inflation adjustment to ensure the grant retains its value over time.

Thank you for your leadership on this important matter.

Sincerely,

10,000 Degrees
Alabama Possible
American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Council on Education
Americans for Financial Reform
Arizona Students’ Association
Associate Students of the University of California, Berkeley
Associated Students of UC Irvine's Office of the External Vice President
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Bottom Line
Breakthrough Central Texas
California Student Aid Commission
Campaign for College Opportunity
Capital Area College Access Network, Lansing, MI
CCCU – Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Center for First-generation Student Success
Coalition of State University Aid Administrators
College Beyond
Complete College America
Consumer Action
Council on Social Work Education
Degrees of Change
Denver Scholarship Foundation
Indigenous Education, Inc.
Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP)
John Burton Advocates for Youth
KIPP Public Schools
Latino U College Access (LUCA)
LeadMN – College Students Connecting for Change
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
More Than Bootstraps
Muskegon Opportunity LCAN & Muskegon Area Promise
National Association of State Student Grant & Aid Programs
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National College Attainment Network
National Scholarship Providers Association
New America, Higher Education Program
NextGen California
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities
OneGoal
Partnership for Los Angeles Schools
Partnership for the Future
Pennsylvania Association for College Admission Counseling
Phi Beta Kappa Society
Reach Higher
Rutgers University Student Assembly
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
Student Public Interest Research Groups (PIRGs)
Students Rising Above
Students United
The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)
The Opportunity Network
The Pittsburgh Promise
Third Way
uAspire
Worthington Scholarship Foundation
Yes We Must Coalition