

AMERICAN COUNCIL ON EDUCATION



OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

June 19, 2009

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael Enzi
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor
and Pensions
United State Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Maintaining Federal Funding for Minority Serving Institutions

Dear Chairman Kennedy and Ranking Member Enzi:

On behalf of the higher education associations listed below, I write to urge you to ensure that vitally needed funding to strengthen America's Minority Serving Institutions (MSIs) does not sunset at the end of Fiscal Year 2009.

We ask that funding designated through the College Cost Reduction and Access Act of 2007 (CCRAA) for Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs), Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Predominately Black Institutions (PBIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), and Alaska Native/Native Hawaiian Institutions (AN/NH) remains available to help these important institutions as they work to increase access to higher education for all of our nation's students.

President Obama has said that "we need to put a college education within reach of every American. That's the best investment we can make in our future." By passing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Congress has provided the single largest increase in the Pell maximum award in the program's history. We thank you for this historic investment in the Pell Grant Program, which serves as the cornerstone of our federal need-based student aid efforts.

As you enact authorization and appropriations bills, we encourage you to build a firm foundation for the investment you have made in the Pell Grant Program by sustaining the funding that was made available under the CCRAA for Title III-A Sections 316 & 317, Title III-B, and Title V of the Higher Education Act (HEA). As a result of CCRAA, Congress provided an additional \$255 million to MSIs in each of the last two years. Without action by Congress to extend this funding, that money will lapse, cutting funding to these institutions and severely limiting the role they will be able to play in meeting the president's ambitious goals.

These vital programs work in conjunction with the Pell Grant Program to expand opportunities for *all* students to participate in postsecondary education. Through the reauthorization of HEA last fall, Congress has strengthened these programs, renewed the federal commitment to increasing access to higher education and broadened the capacity of the higher education system to meet present and future challenges. This action will ring hollow without

additional—or, at the very least, sustained—resources to help MSIs continue their important and unequaled work to educate “the emerging majority” in this country.

We believe that sustaining the federal investment in the nation’s Minority Serving Institutions is critical to our efforts to strengthen America’s human capital and lay the foundation for future economic growth.

We thank you for your consideration of our request and look forward to working with you going forward.

Sincerely,



Molly Corbett Broad
President

MCB/ldw

On behalf of:

ACT, Inc.

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities

American Association of University Professors

American College Personnel Association

American Council on Education

American Dental Education Association

American Indian Higher Education Consortium

APPA: Leadership in Educational Facilities

Association of American Colleges and Universities

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of American Universities

Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities

Association of Community College Trustees

Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges

Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities

Association of Public and Land-grant Universities

Association of Research Libraries

College and University Professional Association for Human Resources

College Board

Council for Advancement and Support of Education

Council for Christian Colleges and Universities

Council for Opportunity in Education

Council of Graduate Schools

Council of Independent Colleges

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 Independent Colleges and Universities

National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators

National Collegiate Athletic Association

The University Continuing Education Association

United Negro College Fund

United States Student Association

Women's College Coalition