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March 14, 2016

## California Congressional Delegation

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the University of California (UC) and the nearly 250,000 students represented by the University of California Student Association (UCSA), we urge full support of the University's and UCSA's shared priorities in the area of higher education.

As Congress begins its work on the FY 2017 appropriations process, UC and UCSA urge Congress to protect programs that benefit and assist our most vulnerable students. The federal government is a key partner in ensuring that UC remains affordable for all eligible Californians. UC students received more than \$1.61 billion in federal financial assistance in academic year 2014-15.

The University has a number of significant priorities for FY 2017, but in conjunction with the UCSA, we would like to call your attention to specific priorities that directly affect our students' ability to finance their education:

- **Pell Grant Program:** UC and UCSA support strong and sustained funding for the Pell Grant Program and restoration of year-round Pell Grants. Currently, more than 40 percent of UC undergraduates, nearly 80,000 students, receive Pell Grants, which is a higher percentage than any peer research university. UC Pell Grant recipients graduate at rates similar to those of all UC freshmen and transfer students. Pell Grants are an integral part of the financial aid package UC offers to its students.
- **Federal Perkins Loan Program:** UC and UCSA support the expansion of the Federal Perkins Loan Program to provide new loan volume to more low-income students, but would oppose elimination of current benefits that could result from program expansion.
- **Stafford Student Loans:** UC and UCSA support strong and sustained efforts to keep borrowers' cost of student loans manageable, and to ensure that the federal government can provide student borrowers with the essential

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services they need. We also support the restoration of federal loan subsidies for graduate students and loan repayment proposals that provide relief to borrowers.

Thank you for your continued support of the students of the University of California. We look forward to continuing to work with you and your staff as you address the many opportunities and challenges we face in higher education.

Yours very truly,



Janet Napolitano  
President  
University of California



Kevin Sabo  
President  
University of California Student Association