



THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA



THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY



CALIFORNIA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

June 25, 2024

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
2207 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Ranking Member  
U.S. House Committee on Appropriations  
2413 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
154 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins  
Vice Chairwoman  
U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations  
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Cole, Ranking Member DeLauro, Chairwoman Murray, and Vice Chairwoman Collins:

On behalf of the University of California (UC), the California State University (CSU) and the California Community Colleges (CCC)—and the students, staff, faculty, and alumni our institutions serve—we write to urge you to provide robust funding in fiscal year (FY) 2025 to support critical education programs, including ones that bolster student access and success within the Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies bill. We also urge you to finalize all FY 2025 appropriations by the end of the current fiscal year to allow agencies and funding recipients to plan and program as efficiently and effectively as possible for the year ahead.

Our state's commitment to public higher education ensures that all Californians have access to high-quality and affordable education and training opportunities. Together, our institutions represent the largest system of higher education in the nation, serving more than 2.7 million students. Our most visible work involves educating the next-generation workforce and fostering future entrepreneurs and inventors; however, our joint mission extends far beyond the classroom. Every day, our institutions conduct groundbreaking research that shapes California's response to wildfires, drought, emerging diseases, and technological challenges. Our systems provide opportunities for traditional and non-traditional students alike to gain the skills necessary to thrive in the global economy. The graduates, inventions, and companies—particularly those in much sought-after industries—that emerge from California's public higher education systems drive the innovation economy in our state and the nation.

Ensuring that our systems provide an opportunity for all students—regardless of background or income—while continuing to be a global innovation leader is paramount to the growth and prosperity of California and our country. At the core of the upward mobility that higher education enables is the federal student aid that—in combination with state and institutional support—provides our students with the means to attend and succeed at institutions of higher education.

For FY 2025, we urge increased investments in the following:

- **Pell Grant Funding.** Pell Grants benefit low-income students and provide key support to hundreds of thousands of students at all three of our systems. By increasing the maximum Pell Grant, Congress can reverse decades of erosion to a program of critical importance to students across the nation. We request that the maximum annual Pell Grant be doubled from the current level of \$7,395 and that additional funds be provided to address any budget shortfall that prevents access for students who need it the most.
- **Campus-Based Aid Programs.** In addition to the Pell Grant, the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) and Federal Work-Study (FWS) program provide the most financially vulnerable students with additional support in obtaining their degree. We request \$1.15 billion for SEOG and \$1.603 billion for FWS.
- **Pipeline Programs.** While many of our priorities center on the education a student receives while attending our institutions, the value that K-12 pipeline programs bring to higher education cannot be overstated. The federal GEAR UP and TRIO programs bring students from underserved communities into an environment that fosters academic achievement, reduce barriers to entry to postsecondary education, and encourage persistence and success. Increased investments in these programs ensure that more students who are eligible for GEAR UP and TRIO have access to quality programming oriented toward prospective students' success in higher education. We request \$400 million for GEAR UP and \$1.298 billion for TRIO.
- **Capacity-building at Minority-Serving Institutions.** Our systems reflect California's tremendous diversity, and many of our institutions are designated as Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) and Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs). Increasing this funding will further enhance our efforts to expand educational opportunities, improve attainment and enhance program quality. We request \$350 million for Title V, Part A (HSI), and \$150 million for Title V, Part B.
- **Student Basic Needs.** Across our three systems, addressing the basic needs of students remains a top priority as this is essential to ensuring students have the resources needed to achieve their full potential. The rising cost of college, coupled with a high cost of living, has increased the stress of managing expenses, especially among low-income and economically vulnerable students. Programs like the Basic Needs Pilot Program and the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) go a long way in meeting the unique challenges our students face. We request \$45 million for the Basic Needs Pilot Program and \$100 million for the CCAMPIS Program.

Thank you for your consideration of our requests. If you have any questions about this letter or the work of our institutions, please contact our federal relations staff. At UC, contact Chris Harrington (202-974-6314); at CSU, contact Greg Schuckman (703-898-8485); and at CCC, contact David O'Brien (650-704-9477).

Sincerely,



Michael V. Drake, M.D.  
President  
University of California



Mildred García  
Chancellor  
California State University



Sonya Christian  
Chancellor  
California Community Colleges

cc: California Congressional Delegation