

September 22, 2021

To the New Jersey Congressional Delegation

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of our institutions—and, more important, on behalf of students of modest means throughout New Jersey and across the country—we write to urge your support for doubling the maximum Pell Grant award as you develop and vote on a budget reconciliation package this month.

At the time of its enactment, the Pell Grant covered nearly 80 percent of the cost of attending a public four-year college. However, the Pell now accounts for less than 30 percent of the cost of attendance, and it is time for a dramatic recalibration of this vital program to restore the promise of Pell to make college possible for the next generation of postsecondary students.

Here in New Jersey, more than 150,000 students each year receive Pell Grants, part of a current universe of 7 million Pell recipients nationwide—including a clear majority of Black students and about half of Latinx students currently enrolled in college. We know there are other potential Pell recipients who believe a college education is beyond their means and thus do not even apply for this benefit. For those students, the wealth gap will only grow wider.

It is exciting and gratifying to see that Congress and the President have been considering ways to help make college more affordable. A college degree is a hugely important tool of social mobility that opens a wide range of opportunities for careers that can transform the lives of students and their families, in addition to propelling economic prosperity and job growth.

Doubling the maximum Pell Grant will help more students from low- and middle-income families to get to and through college. That helps everyone: by cultivating talent from every sector of society, we make our state, and our country, stronger and better.

We believe that, among many thoughtful proposals for increasing access to higher education, doubling the maximum Pell Grant award should be the foundation upon which other efforts can be built. Pell is a proven program, and in combination with other federal aid, state aid, and institutional grants, has provided millions of low-income students a wide array of postsecondary opportunities at both two- and four-year colleges and universities.

With our continued gratitude for the relief funds that you and your colleagues helped make available to New Jersey college students during the pandemic, we ask that you support this long-term investment in our nation's and the state's young people, for whom a college education will be life-changing.

Sincerely,



Christopher L. Eisgruber
President, Princeton University



Jonathan Holloway, Ph.D.
President, Rutgers, The State University of
New Jersey



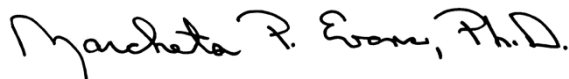
Barbara Gaba, Ph.D.
President, Atlantic Cape Community College



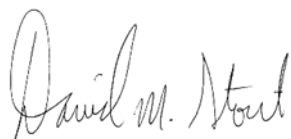
Eric Friedman, Ph.D.
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President, Beth Medrash Govoha



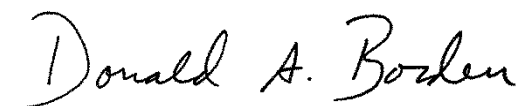
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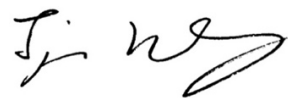
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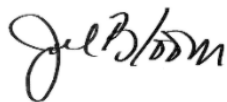
Patrick Leahy, Ed.D.
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Jonathan GS Koppell, Ph.D.
President, Montclair State University



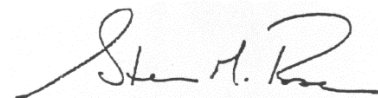
Sue Henderson, Ph.D.
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Joel Bloom, Ed.D.
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Steven M. Rose, Ed.D.
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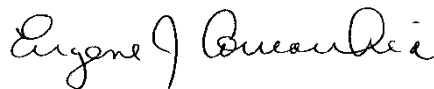
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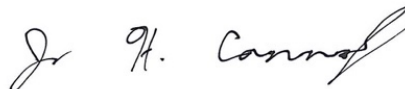
Joseph Nyre, Ph.D.
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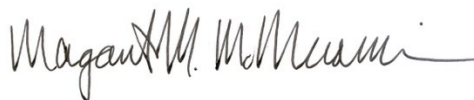
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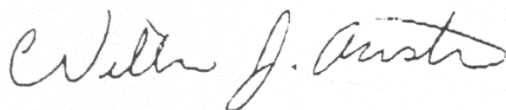
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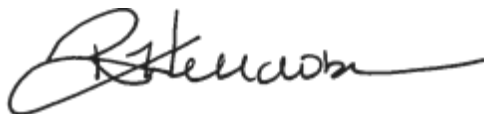
Merodie A. Hancock, Ph.D.
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