



November 5, 2015

The Honorable Roy Blunt, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
136 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole, Chairman  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Patty Murray, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
158 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro, Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Blunt, Chairman Cole, Ranking Member Murray, and Ranking Member DeLauro:

As organizations dedicated to expanding higher education opportunity and success for the nation’s most at-risk students, we write to urge your strong support in the Fiscal Year 2016 Labor-Health and Human Services-Education (Labor-HHS-Education) Appropriations bill for the programs that help in that mission. As you work on a final Fiscal Year 2016 Labor-HHS-Education Appropriations bill – and with the additional funds for nondefense discretionary programs from the Bipartisan Budget Act of 2015 – we ask that you allocate additional resources to the Title III and Title V institutional aid programs that support community colleges, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs), Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs), Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs), Asian American/Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions (AANAPISIs), and other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) – the colleges and universities graduating disproportionate percentages of the growing populations of the nation.

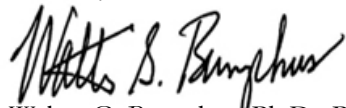
We greatly appreciate the funding increases for these programs in the House-reported bill, but are deeply concerned about the cuts in the Senate-reported bill. If enacted, these cuts would negatively impact academic instruction, student services, technology, and endowment-building that are needed to provide a first-class

education to our students, many of whom need intensive supports due to social, educational, and financial challenges. In addition, the diversion of Pell Grant funds in both the House and Senate committee bills undermines the long-term sustainability of the Pell Grant program, and jeopardizes federal student aid on which more than eight million low-income students depend for college assistance. Without Pell Grants, many of our students would not be able to attain a postsecondary degree.

The Title III and Title V institutional aid programs merit additional investments to restore their funding to the levels that existed in fiscal year 2010. HBCUs, PBIs, HSIs, TCUs, AANAPISIs, and community colleges educate millions of low-income and minority students, many of whom are the first in their families to attend college. It is critical for the country and our communities that we enable these students to obtain the knowledge and workforce skills necessary to be globally competitive.

Any national strategy to boost educational outcomes for low-income and minority students must include expanding the capacity and effectiveness of institutions whose mission is to serve these students. Thus, we urge you to increase critical funding for HBCUs, PBIs, HSIs, TCUs, AANAPISIs, and community colleges that are changing lives and contributing to our country's future.

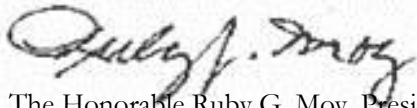
Sincerely,



Walter G. Bumphus, Ph.D., President & CEO  
American Association of Community Colleges



Carrie Billy, Esq., President & CEO  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium



The Honorable Ruby G. Moy, President & CEO  
Asian American and Pacific Islander Association of Colleges and Universities



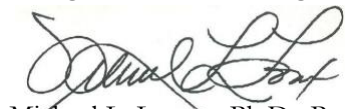
Antonio R. Flores, Ph.D., President & CEO  
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities



Lezli Baskerville, Esq., President & CEO  
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education



Johnny C. Taylor, Jr., President & CEO  
Thurgood Marshall College Fund



Michael L. Lomax, Ph.D., President & CEO  
UNCF