

July 17, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
2365 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Kay Granger
Ranking Member
Appropriations Committee
U.S. House of Representatives
1026 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2413 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
U.S. House of Representatives
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey, Ranking Member Granger, Chairwoman DeLauro, and Ranking Member Cole,

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I would like to commend you for passing the Fiscal Year (FY) 2021 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies (LHHS-ED) appropriations bill out of the full committee. The appropriations levels proposed in the legislation provide critical support for higher education and scientific research, especially during a time of continued uncertainty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. For nearly six decades, CGS has served as the national organization dedicated to advancing graduate education and research. Our membership includes nearly 500 institutions of higher education in the United States, Canada, and abroad. Collectively, our members grant 87 percent of all U.S. doctorates and the majority of U.S. master's degrees.

The proposed funding in the LHHS-ED bill enhances opportunities for students to pursue higher education and complete research at the graduate or postdoctoral level. The ability of individuals to pursue higher education, including graduate degrees, helps ensure that our workforce is prepared to meet the growing demand for jobs requiring a graduate degree at entry-level. In fact, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics, through 2028, these jobs are among the fastest-growing in the U.S. workforce.¹

Therefore, CGS underscores the value of the increased funding for programs that expand opportunities for individuals from all socio-economic backgrounds to pursue graduate education,

¹ U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics. (n.d.). Occupational outlook handbook. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/>.

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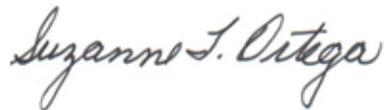
including, Federal Work-Study, TRIO, International Education and Foreign Language Studies programs, and Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN). We also commend the committee's recommendation of including mental health services as an academic area under GAANN in the bill's report language. The demand for mental health services ought to be met with a highly educated and trained workforce, which includes graduate-prepared professionals.

Additionally, the bill continues to increase the maximum award for Pell Grants and considers the benefits for graduate students. The legislation requests a study on how students who did not exhaust their twelve-semester threshold of Pell Grant support during their undergraduate studies could benefit from applying remaining support towards further opportunities. This investment in Pell Grants will assist students most in need entering into the undergraduate pipeline, and potentially the graduate pipeline as well.

CGS also applauds the significant increase in investments in the National Institutes of Health. These funds provide colleges and universities the opportunity to increase research that contributes to timely breakthroughs responsive to national need, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, and enhances our nation's preparedness for the next possible public health crisis. Graduate students and postdocs beginning careers as researchers and scientists rely on these federal funds to be able to contribute valuable discoveries and gain critical experience.

We appreciate your bipartisan commitments in passing the LHHS-ED spending bill, with considerable investments in higher education and federal research. If our organization can be of assistance, please do not hesitate to contact our Vice President of Public Policy and Government Affairs, Lauren Inouye, at Linouye@cgs.nche.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Suzanne T. Ortega".

Suzanne T. Ortega
President