

September 13, 2021

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
United States House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Room 204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Chairman
United States House of Representatives
House Committee on Education and Labor
2176 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Virginia Fox
Ranking Member
United States House of Representatives
House Committee on Education and Labor
2101 Rayburn HOB
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Chairman Scott, and Ranking Member Fox:

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I am writing to thank the House of Representatives for its work on the FY2022 Budget Reconciliation: Build Back Better Act. As part of this Budget Reconciliation package, CGS encourages the inclusion of legislative language that would provide income-eligible graduate students, who received Pell Grant support as undergraduates, the ability to apply remaining semesters of Pell support towards a graduate degree. For over 60 years, 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 majority of U.S. master's degrees.

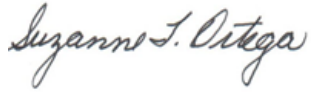
In the 116th Congress, the House Education and Labor Committee passed the College Affordability Act (H.R. 4674). This legislation included language that "allows students to exhaust full Pell eligibility on graduate studies following the completion of a bachelor's degree." In this current Congress, Representatives Ann Kuster (D-NH), Fred Upton (R-MI), Kim Schrier (D-WA), and Tim Burchett (R-TN) reintroduced the Expanding Access to Graduate Education Act (H.R. 4002), which would also allow unused Pell Grant support to be applied towards a graduate degree. So, there has been consistent and bipartisan support for the application of remaining Pell Grant funds to be used towards a graduate degree. Thus, the CGS membership urges the House of Representatives to include this language in an enacted Budget Reconciliation package.

National indicators show that the number of graduate students who receive Pell Grant support as an undergraduate continues to grow. According to recent data, nearly 46 percent of first-year graduate and professional students were former Pell recipients. However, nearly 35 percent did not fully exhaust all 12 semesters of Pell Grant awards. The inclusion of this important language in a final and enacted Budget Reconciliation package would allow income-eligible graduate students to utilize the Pell program towards their first postbaccalaureate degree. This would offer a significant financial benefit to a segment of students most in need of support.

Again, we thank the House Education and Labor Committee and the full House of Representatives for

your work on the FY2022 Budget Reconciliation package. The CGS membership welcomes your support for the inclusion of language to allow income-eligible graduate students to apply unused Pell Grant support towards a graduate degree. If our association can be of any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Ms. Amy Scott, associate vice president for government relations and public policy at amscott@cgs.nche.edu.

Sincerely,



Suzanne T. Ortega
President

Cc:

House Committee on Education and Labor
The Honorable Ann Kuster
The Honorable Fred Upton
The Honorable Kim Schrier
The Honorable Tim Burchett

AFFILIATES

Conference
of Southern
Graduate Schools

Midwestern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Northeastern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Western
Association
of Graduate Schools