



July 19, 2022

The Honorable Stephanie Bice
1223 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Gus Bilirakis
2354 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mike Doyle
270 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Zoe Lofgren
1401 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Bice, Bilirakis, Doyle, and Lofgren:

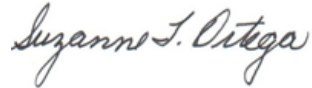
On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools (CGS), I am writing to thank you for establishing the Graduate Research and Development (GRAD) Caucus. For over 60 years, CGS has served as the national organization dedicated to advancing graduate education and research. As an association, we are proud to represent a diverse group of institutions of higher education ranging from research-intensive universities, regional comprehensive colleges and universities, and minority-serving institutions.

As you know, graduate students are essential to the conduct of federally funded research underway at the nation's colleges and universities. In our view, it is of utmost importance to support and develop graduate researchers through mentorship and advising, ensuring the accessibility of graduate school for all, and expanding pathways for graduate researchers to succeed through fellowships and career development opportunities. CGS and our member-institutions appreciate the establishment of a congressional caucus that recognizes and supports the important work and contributions that graduate students make every day in research laboratories across the country.

A recent report by the [National Science Board](#) describes the need to reduce barriers that discourage domestic students from pursuing graduate education, including students from the [Missing Millions](#) that cannot afford an advanced degree. Eliminating the barriers to graduate education will reduce the Missing Millions gap and strengthen our nation's scientific research enterprise. One way to remove the barrier to graduate education is by expanding [access](#) to the Pell Grant program for graduate students. According to 2016 data from the National Postsecondary Student Aid Study, over one-third (34.6%) of former Pell recipients pursuing graduate education did not exhaust the allowable 12 semesters of support during their undergraduate education. Allowing Pell eligible students to use their remaining semesters of support to access graduate education will provide them with the education and training needed to engage in emerging and growing employment sectors. Providing access to graduate education is essential if the United States is to remain competitive.

As the GRAD Caucus begins to set its priorities, please do not hesitate to contact CGS staff. We welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource for the caucus and to provide the latest information on graduate education. We would also welcome the opportunity to meet with congressional staff assigned to the caucus to learn more about its priorities and planned activities. If you have any questions about CGS or the graduate education community, please do not hesitate to contact Amy Scott at amscott@cgs.nche.edu or Nick Cox at ncox@cgs.nche.edu.

Sincerely,



Suzanne T. Ortega
President

AFFILIATES

Conference
of Southern
Graduate Schools

Midwestern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Northeastern
Association
of Graduate Schools

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