

OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT

May 23, 2024

The Honorable Patricia Murray
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and
Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education, and
Related Agencies
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: FY 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies Appropriations

Dear Members of Congress:

On behalf of the [Council of Graduate Schools \(CGS\)](http://www.cgsnet.org), I am writing to encourage bipartisan Congressional support for graduate education in the United States. As the Senate Appropriations Committee begins its consideration of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations legislation, please give special consideration to graduate education programs supported and administered by the National Institutes of Health and the U.S. Department of Education. A robust and sustainable investment in the U.S. higher education system allows for growth within the domestic high-skilled workforce and expansion of scholarship and research throughout our country.

For over 60 years, CGS has served as the national organization dedicated to advancing graduate education and research. Our membership includes 475 institutions of higher education in the United States, Canada, and abroad representing over 1.8 million graduate students. Collectively, our members grant 81 percent of all U.S. doctorates and the majority of U.S. master's degrees. As an association, we are proud to represent a diverse and dynamic group of higher education institutions ranging from public and private research-intensive institutions to regional comprehensive institutions, minority-serving institutions, and historically black colleges and universities. U.S. graduate education is the crown jewel of the American system of higher education, attracting top domestic and international students by creating dynamic and innovative programs that foster scholarship, research, and scientific discovery.

Given the importance of U.S. graduate education to the nation's economy, advancements in science and technology, and the overall well-being of its citizens, CGS encourages the 118th Congress to appropriate \$50.1 billion for the National Institutes of Health and at least \$3.3 billion for Higher Education programs administered by the U.S. Department of Education.

National Institutes of Health (NIH)

As the world's largest biomedical research agency, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) is at the forefront of conducting and funding groundbreaking research in a multitude of fields, including biomedical, behavioral, and social research. NIH's mission is "to seek fundamental knowledge about the nature and behavior of living systems and the application of that knowledge to enhance health, life, and reduce illness and disability." The nation's graduate schools and students are integral to the biomedical research that is conducted on campuses across this country. **For FY 2025, CGS encourages Congress to appropriate \$50.1 billion for NIH.**

This amount of funding would support 43,636 research project grants, which include 10,273 new and competing grants. In fiscal year 2025, NIH funds would support 300,000 research personnel at over 2,800 universities. CGS also encourages Congress to appropriate at least \$43 million in funding for extramural facilities and instrumentation grants from the Office of the Director. The FY 2025 NIH budget proposes funding for new programs that would benefit graduate education and the next-generation biomedical workforce, such as the Research Enhancement Award Program (REAP) for Health Professional Schools and Graduate Schools, the Maximizing Opportunities for Scientific and Academic Independent Careers (MOSIAC) program, which helps a postdoctoral scholar transition to an independent investigator, and the NIH Pathway to Independence Award that provides support for mentorship and independent research.

Since 2022, ARPA-H has driven high-risk and high-reward health research by pursuing groundbreaking cures and maintaining U.S. leadership in biomedical science through strategic initiatives and international collaboration.

For FY 2025, CGS encourages Congress to appropriate \$1.5 billion to ARPA-H. In addition, we urge that any funding for APRA-H should supplement, not supplant, the necessary growth in the NIH base budget.

U.S. Department of Education: Access to Graduate Education and Scholarship

For decades, it has been the mission of the U.S. Department of Education to strengthen the capacity of universities; promote and expand access to postsecondary education and increase college completion rates for students; and broaden global competencies that drive the economic success and competitiveness of the United States. **For FY 2025, the Administration has requested \$3.3 billion for Higher Education programs.** These programs would increase access to high-quality education and improve achievement and completion for students across the nation.

The Department of Education administers crucial graduate education programs, including the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need Program (GAANN). GAANN provides grant funding for graduate students to conduct essential research that addresses national challenges. The program is a three-year fellowship to graduate students with demonstrated financial need. CGS appreciates the \$1 million increase in FY 2024 to GAANN, increasing the total to \$24.5 million, however, historically the program was funded at the \$30 million level. **For these reasons, CGS urges Congress to appropriate at least \$35 million for GAANN in FY 2025.**

The Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement Program is another crucial program administered by the Department of Education. The McNair Scholars Program prepares eligible participants for doctoral studies through involvement in research and other scholarly activities. Participants are from disadvantaged backgrounds and have demonstrated strong academic potential. Following the completion of their undergraduate education, participants enroll in graduate programs and successfully complete their advanced degrees. The goal is to increase the attainment of Ph.D. degrees by students from underrepresented segments of society. **CGS encourages Congress to appropriate \$61.4 million for the McNair Scholars Program in FY 2025.**

Graduate Student Mental Health and Wrap-around Services

The Department of Education funds programs aimed at addressing graduate student mental health needs and providing essential wrap-around services such as food, housing, and childcare assistance. The FY 2025 budget proposes several new programs, including the Comprehensive Postsecondary Student Supports program, which would provide grants to institutions of higher education to improve institutional support for basic and mental health needs and to strengthen institutional capacity to better leverage both internal and external resources to address barriers to student success. It is important to note that graduate schools serve two important and distinct roles in the mental health arena. First, graduate schools provide a refuge and the necessary mental health support for students and their families. Second, graduate schools educate and train the mental health care professionals needed to provide health care services to the people in our communities. CGS supports this

and other new programs aimed at supporting graduate student mental health. In terms of wrap-around services, **CGS strongly supports the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program and urges Congress to appropriate at least \$80 million for this program.** The CCAMPIS program helps to ensure that student parents with low incomes enroll in, persist in, and complete postsecondary education by helping to meet their needs for affordable childcare.

International Education and Foreign Language Studies

The Higher Education Act Title VI and Fulbright-Hays programs will help meet the nation's security and economic needs through the development of expertise in foreign languages and area and international studies. These programs enhance university education by equipping students with language skills and cultural understanding crucial for national security and the global workforce. Over the past four decades, there has been a strong correlation between university language enrollment and Title VI funding. **CGS encourages an appropriation of \$91 million in funding for International Education and Foreign Language Studies. This includes \$79.9 million for Title VI and \$11 million for Fulbright-Hays programs.**

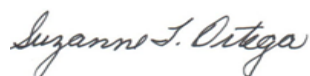
Broadening Participation in Higher Education

CGS strongly advocates for Department of Education programs aimed at advancing graduate education for individuals from diverse backgrounds, including historically underrepresented minority groups and rural communities. CGS supports programs that enable graduate schools to attract, educate, and retain students, postdoctoral researchers and fellows, and faculty from diverse backgrounds. As a result, **CGS urges Congress to appropriate at least \$855.1 million for Aid for Institutional Development under Title III. This amount of funding will support important programs, such as:**

- **Historically Black Graduate Institutions:** \$108.5 million would support graduate students at these institutions by increasing enrollment, retention, and graduation.
- **Master's Degree Programs at HBCUs:** \$21.3 million would make a substantial contribution to graduate education opportunities for Black students in mathematics, engineering, the physical or natural sciences, computer science, information technology, nursing, allied health, or other scientific disciplines.
- **Aid for Hispanic-Serving Institutions:** \$246.5 million to expand and enhance the academic quality, institutional management, fiscal stability, and self-sufficiency of colleges and universities that enroll large percentages of Hispanic students.
- **Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans Program:** \$29.8 million in funding would facilitate entry into and success in graduate study for Hispanic Americans.

Thank you for your continued support for U.S. graduate education and the programs supported by the U.S. Department of Education and the National Institutes of Health.

Sincerely,



Suzanne T. Ortega
President