

February 26, 2018

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chairman
Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chairman
House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Subcommittee
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair and Ranking Members,

As organizations committed to promoting the postsecondary success of college students with children, we are writing to express our strong support for increasing funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) program to \$611 million—the amount needed to provide child care support to 10 percent of Pell recipients who are parents of children ages 0-5. The CCAMPIS program provides vital support for the participation and success of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of campus-based child care, which is widely recognized as one of the most important supports for parenting college students. The increase in CCAMPIS should also be part of a fair and proportional FY18 Labor-H subcommittee appropriations allocation that will allow for needed investment in several priorities in that part of the budget.

Nearly 5 million college students are parents of dependent children, representing slightly more than one-quarter of all undergraduate students in the United States—and their numbers are increasing. Many of these student parents are balancing college and parenting without the support of a spouse or partner, with 2.1 million women in college being single mothers.

Student parents, and particularly those who are single, face acute financial and caregiving demands that can complicate their ability to persist to graduation. Student parents are more likely than other students to live in poverty, to have no resources to devote to college costs, and to incur substantial student debt—due in large part to the high cost of child care. Student parents also spend significant time providing care, with 22 percent of community college students spending at least 20 hours per week caring for dependents, according to the 2017 Community College Survey of Student Engagement.

Access to affordable child care is one of the most important supports that can help student parents succeed in college. Campus-based child care, however, has been declining in recent years, most dramatically at community colleges where the largest numbers of student parents are enrolled. Research suggests that access to campus child care can play a significant role in student parents' ability to persist in college and graduate with a degree; without it, they are often forced to drop out before they have completed their educational programs. In 2017, 27 percent of community college students reported that they are likely or very likely to drop out of school due to their caregiving responsibilities.

The CCAMPIS program is the ONLY federal program dedicated solely to providing child care assistance for students in postsecondary settings. It helps meet the high demand for low-cost child care, enabling student parents to persist in and complete postsecondary credentials, which are critical to their families' economic well-being and are associated with a range of important multigenerational benefits.

At current levels of funding, CCAMPIS only meets less than half a percent of the need for care among students who receive Pell and are parents of young children. While the Trump administration's FY2018 budget acknowledges the role that CCAMPIS plays in these students' ability to succeed in college by proposing an increase of \$35 million for a total of \$50 million, this increase would still only serve less than one percent of this population's need for child care support. Significantly increasing the program's funding to serve 10 percent of Pell recipients with young children would allow the program to reach tens of thousands more students, greatly improving their chances of postsecondary success.

For these reasons, we express our strong support for increasing funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools (CCAMPIS) program to \$611 million annually so that it serves 10 percent of Pell-receiving student parents' need for affordable child care.

Sincerely,

American Association of University Women (AAUW)
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME)
American Federation of Teachers
Association of Community College Trustees
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Equal Justice Works
Excelencia in Education
Georgia Budget and Policy Institute
Los Angeles Valley College
National Council of Jewish Women - Colorado Chapter
National Partnership for Women & Families
Program, Evaluation, and Research Group (PERG) at Endicott College
Santa Monica College
School of Social Work - University of Michigan
Services for Students with Children at Portland State University
Student Parent HELP (Higher Ed for Low Income People) Center, University of Minnesota
Student Parents At Manoa (SPAM), University of Hawaii
Student Veterans of America
The Bell Policy Center
Veterans' Education Success
Women Employed
Young Invincibles