

July 31, 2023



Dear Colleague:

Last week's [Washington Update](#) shared the good news that the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee that funds higher education approved a bi-partisan bill that proposed to increase the Pell Grant maximum award by \$250 next year. This would bring approximately \$250 million more in essential aid to students in the independent college sector alone. This is in stark contrast to the companion proposal in the House that would level fund Pell and eliminate Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) and Federal Work-Study (FWS).

However, the Senate did propose slight funding cuts for both SEOG and FWS, thus setting a troubling precedent. With two less than ideal sets of proposals on the table serving as the starting point for Congressional negotiations in the fall, I want to urge you to prioritize reaching out to your Representative and Senators while they are home on recess. (The House will be in recess from July 29 to September 11; the Senate from July 29 to September 4.)

While a campus visit is ideal, a visit by you to their district offices or seeing your elected representatives at a local event can also be effective. We have crafted [talking points](#) on value, cost and completion, and the federal student aid programs that you can tailor to help guide you in these conversations.

The Senate bill proposes level-funding work colleges at \$11 million and cutting SEOG and FWS each by \$10 million. While this amount is not overly significant in programs with current funding levels of \$910 million for SEOG and \$1.23 billion for FWS, the proposed cuts signal that the Senate might be willing to further cut these programs when they negotiate with the House this fall.

Given the extreme budget pressures in Congress, and the growing concerns about the value of higher education by both Congress and the public, we are pleased that the Senate has proposed an increase in Pell. However, we need to be just as vocal in our support for SEOG and FWS as we have been in supporting the efforts to [double the Pell Grant](#).

### Funding Overview

|                    | <u>House Proposal</u> | <u>Senate Proposal</u>      |
|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------------------------|
| Pell Grant         | Level Funds           | Increases by \$250          |
| Federal Work-Study | <b>ELIMINATES</b>     | <b>CUTS</b> by \$10 million |
| SEOG               | <b>ELIMINATES</b>     | <b>CUTS</b> by \$10 million |

The bill's [report language](#) provides more detailed information on the Senate's proposal. Student Financial Assistance starts on page 236. Congressional earmarks are also included in the Senate bill and are listed starting on page 347. The House bill does not include earmarks.

Thank you for your continued support of the campus-based aid and Pell Grant programs and for engaging in this advocacy during your summer break and as you prepare for the fall semester. Together, we can use the August recess to remind elected officials of how important Pell Grants, SEOG and FWS are to their constituents.

Regards,

Barbara

**Barbara K. Mistick, D.M.**

President

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