April 1, 2021

Senator Jeff Merkley
531 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Cliff Bentz
1239 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congresswoman Suzanne Bonamici
2231 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Kurt Schrader
2431 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Senator Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Congressman Earl Blumenauer
1111 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Congressman Peter DeFazio
2134 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Members of the State of Oregon’s Congressional Delegation:

As presidents of Oregon’s private, nonprofit colleges and universities, we write to urge your leadership in enacting President Biden’s proposal to double the Pell Grant maximum and ensure that investment is permanent by making the increased portion of the grant an entitlement. No greater step could be taken to increase access and success for the nearly 72,000 students who rely on Pell Grants to attend a postsecondary institution in Oregon.

This year alone, Pell Grants are providing nearly $270 million to make college possible for students from low-income families and those who are the first in their families to pursue postsecondary education. The impact this program has had on the lives of individuals and their families, and the economic health and competitiveness of the State of Oregon, and indeed the nation, is without parallel.

Next year our nation will celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the Pell Grant program. It would be a fitting tribute to our state and nation to honor this pivotal milestone by doubling the program by the June 23, 2022 anniversary and tying the legacy of the Pell Grant program to the 117th Congress and the current Administration.

The private, nonprofit higher education sector in Oregon stands ready to assist you in this collective effort to ensure the Pell Grant program continues to transform the lives of the students we serve.

Sincerely,

Miles Davis
President, Linfield University
Chair, Board of Trustees
Oregon Alliance of Independent Colleges and Universities
Joseph Womack  
President  
Bushnell University

Sheldon Nord  
President  
Corban University

Robin Baker  
President  
George Fox University

Wim Wiewel  
President  
Lewis & Clark College

Dr. G. Craig Williford  
Craig Williford  
President  
Multnomah University

Melanie Henriksen  
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National University of Natural Medicine

David Ellis  
Interim President  
Pacific Northwest College of Art

Lesley Hallick  
President  
Pacific University

Audrey Bilger  
President  
Reed College

Rev. Mark Poorman, C.S.C  
President  
University of Portland

Joseph Brimhall  
President  
University of Western States

Brian Johnson  
President  
Warner Pacific University

Charles Conniry  
President  
Western Seminary

Stephen Thorsett  
President  
Willamette University