



Larry Hogan
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford
Lt. Governor

Andrew R. Smarick
Chair

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.
Secretary

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senate
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen
United States Senate
110 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer
Majority Leader
H-107, U.S. Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger
United States House of Representatives
2206 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Sarbanes
United States House of Representatives
2370 Rayburn House Office Building
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The Honorable Andy Harris, M.D.
United States House of Representatives
2334 Rayburn House Office Building
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The Honorable Anthony Brown
United States House of Representatives
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The Honorable Jamie Raskin
United States House of Representatives
2242 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Trone
United States House of Representatives
1110 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kweisi Mfume
United States House of Representatives
2263 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 29, 2021

Dear Members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation:

Thank you so much for your longstanding leadership and partnership in helping to ensure that financial obstacles do not impede students from pursuing higher education opportunities. As leaders of our higher education sector in Maryland, we write to urge you to continue this commitment to our lowest-income students by **doubling the Pell Grant maximum award**. Further, we encourage you to make this award an entitlement.

For the 2018-2019 academic year, more than 95,000 Maryland students (about 27% of total undergraduate enrollment) received a Pell Grant (who attended both public and private postsecondary institutions in the State) resulting in over \$353 million dollars in federal student financial aid. Unsurprisingly, these students typically carry disproportionate student loan debt burdens when compared with their higher-income peers. We believe that there is no greater step that could be taken to increase access and success for so many low-income, first generation, and underrepresented minority students.

As you are aware, President Biden has made the doubling of the Pell Grant one of his early priorities. Next year, June 23, 2022 marks the 50th Anniversary of the Pell Grant Program. It would be a great tribute

to honor this event by increasing the Pell Grant award in such a meaningful way and tying the legacy of the Pell Grant Program to the 117th Congress and the current Administration.

We truly appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request! The entire higher education sector in Maryland stands united and ready to assist you in this effort. Please feel free to contact any of us for more specific information regarding Pell Grant recipients at our institutions.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. James D. Fielder
Secretary
Maryland Higher Education Commission



Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky
Executive Director
Maryland Association of Community Colleges



Ms. Sara Fidler
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MD Independent College & University Association



Dr. David K. Wilson
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Dr. Tuajuanda C. Jordan
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