

April 21, 2022

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Chairwoman
House Committee on Appropriations and
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human
Services, Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Tom Cole
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
Education, and Related Agencies

Dear Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Cole, Chairwoman Murray, and Ranking Member Blunt,

As 41 organizations, institutions, and advocates 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 School (CCAMPIS) Program to \$500 million—the amount needed to provide child care support to approximately 6 percent of Pell-eligible parenting students of children ages 0-5. CCAMPIS provides vital support for the participation and success of low-income parents in postsecondary education through the provision of subsidized child care, which is widely recognized as one of the most important supports for parenting college students.

This historic moment demands a historic investment in parenting students and their children. The COVID-19 crisis has put into stark relief the challenges parenting students—many of whom are also working parents—face balancing child care, academics, one job or several jobs, and precarious finances, even before the pandemic. [Recent data](#) from the 2020 Gallup-Lumina Student Study demonstrate that parenting students have been more likely to cancel or pause their educational journeys in the last six months than students without children. **Increasing CCAMPIS funding to \$500 million in the Labor-HHS-ED appropriations bill would ensure that roughly 100,000 more parenting college students receive the child care assistance they need to continue their educational journeys and be successful in college.**

As is highlighted in the recently passed S. Res. 362 designating September as [National Student Parent Month](#), parenting students are a growing student population, uniquely motivated to excel in their programs of study, despite the many challenges they face. Nearly 4 million college students are parents of dependent children, representing more than one in five undergraduates in the United States. Many of these parenting students are balancing college and parenting without the support of a spouse or partner: 1.7 million women in college are single mothers. Parenting students, particularly those who are single, face acute financial, work, or caregiving demands that can complicate their ability to persist to graduation. Parenting students 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. Parenting students also spend significant time providing care, with 21 percent of community college students spending more than 20 hours per week caring for dependents, according to the [2020 Community College Survey of Student Engagement](#).

Access to affordable child care is one of the most important supports that can help parenting students succeed in college. Data from one community college show, for example, that usage of the campus child care center led to a 21 percent increase in degree attainment over the rate for parenting students who did not access the center. Students often do not have access to affordable care, however. According to a [recent survey](#) of roughly 23,000 parenting students, 70 percent of respondents reported that their child care arrangement was unaffordable. Without affordable child care, parenting students are often forced to make tough decisions about their enrollment. In 2020, 28 percent of community college students reported that they are likely or very likely to leave school due to their caregiving responsibilities.

Unfortunately, campus-based child care has been declining in recent years—most dramatically at community colleges, which enroll the largest share of parenting students. COVID-19 and the pandemic’s economic fallout have exacerbated the national child care crisis. The need for parenting student access to affordable child care has never been greater than it will be as campuses re-open.

We appreciate Congress including language on the FY 2022 appropriations omnibus that waived the maximum grant cap in the CCAMPIS program. As a result of this progress and the return to campus for many students, we expect a significant increase in demand for the CCAMPIS program in FY23. The previous grant maximum limited an institution’s CCAMPIS grant to no more than 1% of their Pell Grant funds, despite the fact that more than 20 percent of undergraduate students are parenting students. The U.S. Department of Education is now finalizing the parameters for the next competition, but larger CCAMPIS grants will make the program much more economically viable for under-resourced colleges, including community colleges, HBCUs, TCUs, and other MSIs, and many more of their students stand to benefit. We urge Congress to maintain language in the appropriations bill that waives the CCAMPIS maximum grant cap

The CCAMPIS program is the only federal program dedicated solely to providing child care assistance for low-income students in postsecondary settings. Other available child care assistance, such as subsidies provided through the Child Care and Development Block Grant, are important sources of support but can be hard for parenting students to access due to restrictive eligibility rules such as work requirements and degree limitations. CCAMPIS has no work requirements, and it helps meet students’ need for low-cost, high-quality child care. This support enables them to persist toward and complete postsecondary credentials that are critical to their families’ economic well-being and associated with a range of multigenerational benefits. Scaling up this program to serve a larger percentage of Pell-eligible students with young children would allow CCAMPIS to reach 100,000 more students, greatly improving their chances of postsecondary success. This critical investment will also stabilize the campus child care sector, which provides a lifeline to college opportunities for students with children.

For these reasons, we express our strong support for increasing funding for the CCAMPIS Program to \$500 million in the FY2023 Labor-H appropriations bill.

Sincerely,

Higher Learning Advocates
Achieving the Dream

Advance Vermont
All Our Kin
America Forward
Ascend at the Aspen Institute
Association of Young Americans (AYA)
Center for First-generation Student Success
Clearinghouse on Women's Issues
Education Design Lab
Feminist Majority Foundation
First Focus Campaign for Children
Generation Hope
Healthy Teen Network
JFF
John Burton Advocates for Youth
LeadMN - College Students Connecting for Change
Los Angeles Valley College Family Resource Center
Mesa Community College
NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Organization for Women
National Skills Coalition
New America Higher Education Program
One Family
Save the Children
SchoolHouse Connection
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
Student Parent HELP Center U of M
Student Veterans of America
SUNY Jamestown Community College
The Education Trust
The Hope Center for College, Community, and Justice
The Graduate! Network
The Institute for College Access & Success
The Jed Foundation
Tragedy Assistance Program for Survivors (TAPS)
uAspire
UPCEA
Women Employed
Veterans Education Success
Young Invincibles