

NORTH CAROLINA
INDEPENDENT
COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

May 26, 2021

A. Hope Williams
President

- Barton College
Wilson
- Belmont Abbey College
Belmont
- Bennett College
Greensboro
- Brevard College
Brevard
- Cabarrus College of Health Sciences
Concord
- Campbell University
Burlington
- Catawba College
Salisbury
- Chowan University
Murfreesboro
- Davidson College
Davidson
- Duke University
Durham
- Elon University
Elon
- Gardner-Webb University
Boiling Springs
- Greensboro College
Greensboro
- Guilford College
Greensboro
- High Point University
High Point
- Johnson C. Smith University
Charlotte
- Lees-McRae College
Banner Elk
- Lenoir-Rhyne University
Hickory
- Livingstone College
Salisbury
- Louisburg College
Louisburg
- Mars Hill University
Mars Hill
- Meredith College
Raleigh
- Methodist University
Fayetteville
- Montreat College
Montreat
- N.C. Wesleyan College
Rocky Mount
- Pfeiffer University
Misenheimer
- Queens University of Charlotte
Charlotte
- St. Andrews University
Laurinburg
- Saint Augustine's University
Raleigh
- Salem College
Winston-Salem
- Shaw University
Raleigh
- University of Mount Olive
Mount Olive
- Wake Forest University
Winston-Salem
- Warren Wilson College
Asheville
- William Peace University
Raleigh
- Wingate University
Wingate

The Honorable Richard Burr
United States Senate
217 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Burr:

Thank you for your support of higher education in North Carolina and, especially, for the critical assistance this last year during the pandemic. That support enabled all our colleges to continue to educate students safely and to protect faculty and staff and students during the pandemic.

On behalf of the 36 institutions of North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities, I am writing to encourage you to take another leadership role in enacting a proposal supported by public and private higher education sectors across the country: to double the Pell Grant maximum and ensure that the increase is permanent. No greater step could be taken to increase access and success for the 50 percent of North Carolina undergraduate students who attend North Carolina's independent colleges and universities each year and qualify for this critical aid as well as all out-of-state Pell recipients.

Pell Grants have provided postsecondary opportunities for working- and middle-class families for nearly fifty years, making college more affordable for generations of students. But over time the value of the maximum Pell Grant award has steadily declined.

Doubling the maximum Pell Grant award is the single most important step Congress could take to make college possible for low-income and first-generation college students. Expanding the grant would also ensure that more working-class families are served through the program. With as many as 80 to 90 percent of students receiving need-based financial aid among our colleges and universities, the effect of doubling Pell could be the difference in many students' ability to attend college.

In our Annual Meeting of presidents recently, the proposed increase was unanimously and vigorously endorsed and presidents asked that I write you on their behalf to request this support. The increase would have a tremendous impact, resulting in the much great likelihood that North Carolina will reach its 2 million by 2030 educational attainment goal. Our colleges and universities stand ready to assist you in this collective effort to ensure that the Pell Grant program continues to transform the lives of the students we serve.

Respectfully,



A. Hope Williams

This would help
all students and
all sectors of higher
education to help
students receive an
education that is the "best
fit" for them - Odeu Wake Forest!