



The Commission on  
**INDEPENDENT**  
Colleges & Universities  
in New York

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## Office of the President

April 21, 2021

Dear Members of the New York Congressional Delegation:

On behalf of New York's 100+ private, not-for-profit colleges and universities and our nearly 500,000 students, I write to urge you to join Representatives Cicilline, Waters and Jones, in their support the proposal to double the maximum Pell Grant and ensure the increase is permanent by making the increased portion of the grant an entitlement. The Dear Colleague Letter being circulated their offices is included as a separate attachment to this letter.

Each year, more than 250,000 New Yorkers receive Pell Grants to fund their higher education. Increasing their grant awards is the most impactful step Congress can take to help low-income and first-generation students. Increasing federal grant aid will help more students complete their degrees while lowering the cost of college. Private colleges in New York already provide significant aid to students — more than \$6.4 billion in the last year alone — but we cannot meet students' needs alone, we need partnership from the federal government.

Next year will mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Pell Grant program, a program that has helped millions of Americans pursue their college degrees. Doubling Pell Grants and making that additional spending an entitlement that requires mandatory spending would not only be a fitting way to mark this anniversary, it would also serve as an important step toward our nation's post-pandemic recovery. Making a meaningful investment in this program by doubling awards will pay dividends for generations to come.

The students and families who benefit from Pell Grants are the same who have suffered disproportionate impacts from the pandemic. These working-class families and first-generation students need your support to turn their college dreams into reality. As these students' representatives in Congress, we ask that you prioritize investing in this critical student aid funding.

If you would like to sign on to this request, please see the attachment to this letter, or contact Matt McGinn ([matthew.mcgin@mail.house.gov](mailto:matthew.mcgin@mail.house.gov)) with Congressman Cicilline's office, Patrick Fergusson ([patrick.fergusson@mail.house.gov](mailto:patrick.fergusson@mail.house.gov)) with Congresswoman Waters's office, or Sabir Muhammad ([sabir.muhammad@mail.house.gov](mailto:sabir.muhammad@mail.house.gov)) with Congressman Jones's office.

Thank you for your support of New York's Independent colleges and universities and our students.

Regards,



Drew Bogner