

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 23, 2025

The Honorable Shelley Moore Capito
Chair
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate Washington,
DC 20510

The Honorable Tammy Baldwin
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
Appropriations Committee
United States Senate Washington,
DC 20510

Dear Chair Moore Capito and Ranking Member Baldwin:

As you work to develop the Fiscal Year 2026 (FY26) Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill, we request your continued support for the Campus-Based Student Financial Aid Programs in Title IV of the Higher Education Act. The Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG), and Federal Work-Study (FWS) programs work together with Pell Grants and Direct Student Loans to provide a manageable balance of grants, loans, and work to ensure students from all backgrounds can pursue a rewarding academic path.

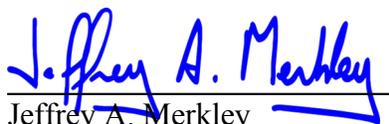
SEOG provides up to \$4,000 in grants to low- and middle-income students and funds programs that help at-risk students get into and stay in college. Providing low-income students with grant aid increases student retention and success and reduces borrowing. We request that to avoid losing ground due to recent inflation, the SEOG program receive at least \$966.3 million in FY26 through the Departments of Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill.

Similarly, FWS provides a wide variety of job opportunities on campus for students to work to cover part of their tuition. Having a part-time job on campus is a proven method of keeping low-income students engaged in their campus community while completing their degree on time, a fundamental goal of federal student aid. We ask for the FWS program to be funded at least at \$1.31 billion, which would match inflation from Congress's last increase in 2023 until today.

Campus-based aid programs are the original federal partnerships in higher education. They were created as an incentive for institutions to partner with the federal government to support qualified low-income students attending college. Furthermore, the programs require that schools provide a 25 percent minimum match, ensuring they have a financial incentive to promote student success. Many institutions go above and beyond the requirement, especially in grant aid. We must continue to support our institutions and the students they serve.

Thank you for considering this important request and for your continued leadership in supporting federal student aid programs that help millions of students nationwide realize higher education.

Sincerely,


Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator


Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator


Alex Padilla
United States Senator


Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator


Tim Kaine
United States Senator

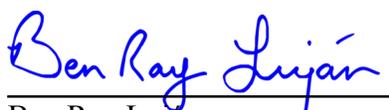

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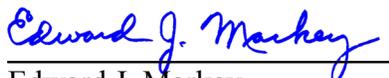

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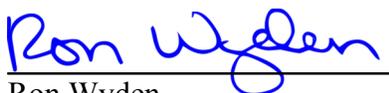
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