FY24 Support Doubling the Pell Grant

Deadline: COB March 24th, 2023

Current Signers: Magaziner*, Waters*

FY23 Signers: Waters*, Auchincloss, Barragan, Beatty, Casten, Craig, DeFazio, DeSaulnier, Dingell, Foster, Hayes, Khanna, Matsui, McBath, McEachin, McGovern, Nadler, Pingree, Ruiz, Sablan, Sarbanes, David Scott, Sires, Strickland, Swalwell, Bennie Thompson,

Dear Colleague:
Please join us in requesting that the House Appropriations Committee provide robust funding for the Federal Pell Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2024 so that the maximum individual award can be increased to $12,990, which is nearly double the current maximum award. We also ask that appropriators secure the long-term affordability impact of the Pell Grant program for years to come by indexing the maximum award amount to inflation and ensuring that funding for the program is fully mandatory, rather than discretionary. These policy changes will ensure that the financial support the Pell Grant program provides to students as they pursue higher education will be insulated from market changes or budget shortfalls. Today, the maximum Pell Grant only covers about one third of the cost of an average public four-year college. With tuition costs steadily increasing, on top of other necessary expenses, fewer students Pell recipients face greater challenges in completing their degree. Doubling the maximum Pell Grant will cover more of the overall cost of a college education, help more students complete college, and help ensure students are not limited solely by their parents’ income.
If you would like to sign on to this request, please sign on via Quill here. If you have any questions, please contact Elisa Ramirez (elisa.ramirez@mail.house.gov) with Congressman Magaziner’s office.

Sincerely,
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress

Maxine Waters
Member of Congress

LETTER TEXT

Dear Chairman Aderholt and Ranking Member DeLauro:
As you begin work on this year’s Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, we ask that you provide robust funding for the Federal Pell Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2024 in order to facilitate increasing the maximum individual award to $12,990. We also ask that appropriators secure the long-term affordability impact of the Pell Grant program for years to come by indexing the maximum award amount to inflation and ensuring that funding for the program is fully mandatory, rather than discretionary. These policy changes will ensure that the financial support the Pell Grant program provides to students as they pursue higher education will be insulated from market changes or budget shortfalls.

Despite being the cornerstone of our nation’s student financial aid system, Pell Grants today cover less than one-third of the average cost of attendance at a public four-year university, which is the lowest share of tuition in the program’s history.
Increased tuition costs, as well expenses like textbooks, housing, food, and transportation, have drastically diminished Pell’s purchasing power. This places greater strain on the students and families that the program was designed to help. Doubling the maximum Pell Grant will significantly increase the award’s purchasing power, thus ensuring it will truly benefit the students and families that need it most.

For nearly 50 years, Pell Grants have provided much needed financial assistance to low-income families, unlocking higher education opportunities for millions of students. Because these grants are awarded solely based upon a student’s financial need and do not have to be repaid, they are often the only vehicle available to low- and moderate-income students to pay for a college education. Strengthening the program will not only make college more affordable, but it will also improve outcomes by providing grant recipients more opportunity to focus on school, helping them cover their basic needs, and eliminating barriers to completion. Helping low- and moderate-income students obtain a college degree will promote equity and strengthen our communities, workforces, and nation. This investment will reinforce our national commitment to promoting opportunity to obtain a college education regardless of family income.

Thank you again for your attention to this critical issue. We look forward to working with you on ways to expand access to a quality higher education.