



December 5, 2008

The Honorable Tom Harkin
Chairman
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
and Education
U.S. Senate
131 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Arlen Specter
Ranking Member
Appropriations Subcommittee on
Labor, Health and Human Services,
and Education
U.S. Senate
131 Dirksen SOB
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Harkin and Specter:

On behalf of NASULGC, A Public University Association, which represents 216 public research universities, land-grant institutions and state university systems, I write to respectfully request your strong support in the FY2009 appropriations conference negotiations for agencies and programs of great importance not only to public universities but to the nation. Outlined below are our specific requests for programs in your bill.

After five years of mostly nominal increases and cuts that have cost the agency 11 percent of its purchasing power due to inflation, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) remains in need of renewed investment. The target set in the NIH Authorization passed in 2006 would provide \$31.1 billion to NIH in 2009, which remains our recommendation. We are grateful for the leadership shown in Congress, and despite an effective decrease requested from the Administration, both the House and Senate Appropriations Committees were able to provide increases for FY2009: +3.2 percent to \$30.4 Billion in the House, and +2.7 percent to \$30.25 billion in the Senate. We hope the FY2009 increase is the beginning of a sustained and steady growth for the agency.

The need for investment in students through federal student aid programs will only grow as we face the economic challenges of the coming years. A strong, consistent Pell Grant program, combined with continued growth for the many other critical federal student aid programs, will provide the essential financial foundation students will need as they train themselves for the economy of the future. By investing in students and their futures we can ensure the development of the innovators and leaders who will fuel the nation's economic growth in the coming decades.

Specifically, we ask that the Pell Grant maximum be funded at \$5,100 in FY2009. In addition, we also ask that the Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant (SEOG) program be funded at \$1 billion and that Perkins Loan program be funded at \$220 million. Furthermore, we request that the Javits and the Graduate Assistance in the Areas

of National Need (GAANN) programs, which support many of the nation's brightest graduate students, be funded at \$12.5 million and \$32 million, respectively.

I look forward to working with you through the remainder of the appropriations process to ensure that the nation maintains its ability to compete and innovate at a global level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Peter McPherson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent initial "P" and a long, sweeping underline.

Peter McPherson
President