



September 7, 2018

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair, Senate LHHS-ED Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member, Senate LHHS-ED Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole
Chair, House LHHS-ED Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro
Ranking Member, House LHHS-ED Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Richard Shelby
Chair, Senate Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Ranking Member, Senate Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kay Granger
Chair, House Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter Visclosky
Ranking Member, House Defense Subcommittee
Committee on Appropriations
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairs and Ranking Members:

On behalf of the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), I thank you and your colleagues for your work on the fiscal year (FY) 2019 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education (LHHS-ED) and Defense appropriations bills and for your leadership in advancing the bills in a timely fashion. I also write to request that the strongest possible support for research and higher education programs prevail in conference.

As the House and Senate LHHS-ED and Defense conferees work to reconcile their bills, APLU urges that research and higher education programs are a top priority. Strong investments in defense scientific research will help spur the discoveries needed for our national defense. A boost to critical biomedical research through the National Institutes of Health (NIH) would catalyze cures and groundbreaking innovations. Additionally, increased support for federal student aid and higher education programs would expand access for students and enhance our nation's economic competitive edge through a skilled workforce. Overall, investments in these programs continue to demonstrate a significant return -- growing our economy and improving the health and well-being of our society.

Below, I note where the House and Senate measures may differ on APLU priorities and express our views on final appropriations levels, which we hope you will consider as you craft final legislation.

Department of Health and Human Services:

APLU greatly appreciates your commitment to the world's premier biomedical research funding agency, the NIH, and we are grateful for the increases provided in both the House and Senate bills. We strongly request you to fund the NIH at least at \$39.084 billion, the amount included in the Senate Appropriations bill. The scientific and medical advances supported by the NIH yield a potent return and bolster the health of our economy as well as our citizens. We truly appreciate the deep commitment that the Appropriations Committees and others in Congress have demonstrated to the NIH over the past recent years and we enthusiastically encourage you to sustain this effort. Relatedly, we thank you for your continued support of the duly negotiated facilities and administrative cost rates.

As demand for health care services intensifies across the country, APLU encourages you to increase funding for Title VII health professions programs and Title VIII Nursing Workforce Development programs at the Health Resources Services Administration. While we prefer the Senate's proposed level of \$643 million over the House level, we suggest funding of \$690 million for these important programs. The Title VII and VIII programs play a critical role in bolstering the health workforce and meeting the health education needs in the United States. In addition, funding for these programs remains important for meeting the health needs of underserved populations.

Lastly, in the HHS title of the bill, we ask that you maintain the Department's salary cap for extramural researchers at Executive Level II. We also urge that the final agreement not include new restrictions on important lifesaving research.

Department of Education:

APLU urges you to provide robust funding for student success and financial aid programs. APLU supports the appropriations necessary to reach the maximum Pell Grant award of at least \$6,195, which is the award level proposed in the FY2019 Senate LHHS-ED bill. APLU urges appropriators to not rescind from the program's surplus, which is needed to protect the long-term fiscal health of the program and support improvements such as continued inflation adjustments.

APLU strongly recommends you fund the Gaining Early Awareness & Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP) and TRIO Programs at levels consistent with the House LHHS-ED committee proposal, at least \$360 million and \$1.06 billion respectively. These programs help increase the number of low-income students who enter and succeed in postsecondary education.

Department of Defense:

It is critical to our national security that the United States military maintain its technical and scientific superiority. Strong, sustained investments in defense scientific research will help spur the discoveries needed to develop the battlefield technology and capabilities of tomorrow. That is why APLU greatly prefers the Senate's FY2019 proposal of \$15.426 billion over the House level

for the Department of Defense (DoD) Science and Technology (S&T) account, covering 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3 research and development. Further, we strongly support and appreciate the Senate's figure for DoD basic research (6.1) of \$2.798 billion in FY2019.

Likewise, we encourage the conferees to follow the Senate in funding the Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency (DARPA) at \$3.447 billion. DARPA has played an important role in funding high-risk, high-reward research, which has led to many significant defense technologies, some of which have also evolved into remarkable civilian applications, such as GPS.

Thank you for your consideration of our views and recommendations regarding the LHHS-ED and Defense appropriations bills. Please consider APLU as a resource as you work to finalize FY2019 funding.

Sincerely,



Peter McPherson
President
APLU

cc: Senate Appropriations Committee Chair Richard Shelby
House Appropriations Committee Chair Rodney Frelinghuysen
Senate Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Patrick Leahy
House Appropriations Committee Ranking Member Nita Lowey
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies
Members of the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Defense
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