March 19, 2015

United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative:

On behalf of the over eighty member organizations and institutions of the Student Aid Alliance, which represents students, college presidents, and other educators who support federal student aid, we write to express our strong opposition to the FY 2016 Budget Resolution under consideration in the House.

It would be difficult to overstate the significant negative impact this budget resolution would have on American college students. At a time when the return on investment of a college education has never been greater; when global competition has never been more intense; and when our economy is more dependent than ever on an educated and innovative workforce, this budget represents a threat to our nation’s future economic competitiveness. In particular:

- The budget resolution would freeze the Pell Grant maximum award at the current $5,775 for 10 years, and eliminates over $89 billion in mandatory Pell funding.
- The budget would further reduce eligibility for Pell Grants, forcing students with financial need to borrow more to afford college.
- The budget would eliminate the in-school interest subsidy for low-income undergraduates, cutting over $34 billion in aid — and adding an average of $3,800 in debt to the students with the most need.
- The budget would eliminate public service loan forgiveness and roll back income-based repayment programs, cutting $26.8 billion in benefits to borrowers. This will make student loans more expensive to repay, especially for nurses, police, firefighters, service members, teachers and other public service employees.
- This budget would cut domestic discretionary funding by $759 billion over the next ten years, putting extraordinary pressure on the funding for student aid programs.
The budget would add a market risk penalty to student loan scoring, artificially inflating the cost of student loan programs and obscuring the actual budgetary impact of these programs.

Overall, this budget would cut over $150 billion in student aid. If enacted, this approach will threaten America’s current competitive advantage in the global economy while countries such as China and India are rapidly expanding their investments in higher education.

We urge you to affirm the historic, bipartisan commitment Congress has made to America’s students and reject the draconian cuts proposed in the House Budget Resolution. The pathway to economic growth requires a continued investment in postsecondary education.

Sincerely,

Molly Corbett Broad  
Co-Chairman

David Warren  
Co-Chairman
AACRAO: American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
ACT, Inc.
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Colleges of Osteopathic Medicine
American Association of Colleges of Pharmacy
American Association of University Professors
American College Personnel Association
American Council on Education
American Dental Education Association
American Federation of Teachers
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
American Society for Engineering Education
American Student Association of Community Colleges
APPA
Association of American Law Schools
Association of American Universities
Association of American Veterinarian Medical Colleges
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Schools of Allied Health Professionals
Boston University
Clemson University
Coalition of Higher Education Assistance Organization
Columbia University
Consortium of Christian Colleges and Universities
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
Duke University
EDUCAUSE
Georgetown University
Harvard University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

2015 Members
Michigan State University
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association for Equal Opportunity in Higher Education
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of College Stores
National Association of Graduate and Professional Students
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Association of Student Personnel Administrators
National College Access Network
National Council for Community and Education Partnerships
National Council of Higher Education Loan Resources
National Council of Research Administrators
National Direct Student Loan Coalition
National Education Association
Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
The California State University
The College Board
The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising
The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
The National Collegiate Athletic Association
The Ohio State University
UNCF
United States Student Association
University Continuing Education Association
University of California
University of Maryland System
University of Massachusetts
University of Michigan
University of Rochester
University of Southern California
University of Washington
US Public Interest Research Group
Utah Valley State College
Vanderbilt University
Women’s College Coalition
Work Colleges Coalition