

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

May 17, 2010

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
2358 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and
Human Services, and Education
House Appropriations Committee
2441 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We are writing to ask you to provide the supplemental funds needed to eliminate the Pell Grant funding gap. This critical program is the primary financial aid program for college students, and the Department of Education estimates that 8.7 million students will rely on Pell Grants to afford college in the next year.

The economic downturn resulted in a greater number of students attending college in order to acquire the skills needed to compete in a difficult economy. With growing numbers of students enrolling, and those students having greater financial need than in years past, demand for Pell grants has surged. Pell Grant applications are increasing by nearly twenty percent annually, compared to the roughly three percent annual increases seen in better economic times. This increased demand has resulted in the funding gap we are currently experiencing.

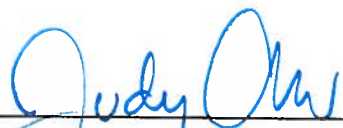
While recent reconciliation legislation passed by this Congress retired a significant portion of the Pell shortfall, there remains an accumulated funding gap of \$5.5 billion. Without supplemental appropriations for FY 2011 we are concerned that the FY 2011 allocations for Pell will negatively affect other important programs in the Labor, Health and Human Services and Education Appropriations bill. If \$5.5 billion were taken from

the Pell Grant program funding directly, such a cut would reduce the Pell Grant maximum award, immediately after Congress promised students a \$5,550 award level in FY2010. In such a tight budget year, a drastic cut in funding for other programs in order to preserve Pell is a poor choice.

A college degree is increasingly important in the modern economy and Pell Grants are vital to helping millions of deserving students achieve that goal. A skilled and well-trained workforce is necessary for the success of America's economy. We ask you to support America's students and economy and provide the crucial funding needed to retire the Pell Grant funding gap.

Thank you for your support of this valuable program and your consideration of our request.

Sincerely,



Rep. Judy M. Chu



Rep. Joe Baca



Rep. Tammy Baldwin



Rep. Shelley Berkley



Rep. Howard Berman



Rep. Tim Bishop



Rep. Leonard Boswell



Rep. Robert Brady



Rep. Bruce Braley



Rep. Corrine Brown



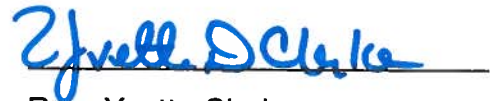
Rep. Lois Capps



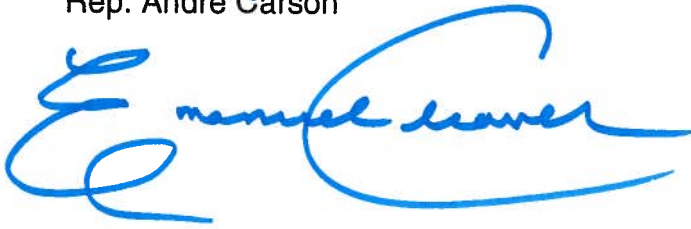
Rep. Michael Capuano



Rep. André Carson



Rep. Yvette Clarke



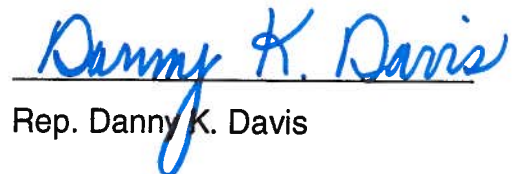
Rep. Emanuel Cleaver



Rep. John Conyers, Jr.



Rep. Joe Courtney



Rep. Danny K. Davis



Rep. John Dingell



Rep. Bob Filner



Rep. John Garamendi



Rep. Alan Grayson



Rep. Raúl Grijalva



Rep. Ruben Hinojosa



Rep. Mazie Hirono



Rep. Steve Kagen



Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy




Rep. Dennis Kucinich



Rep. Jim Langevin



Rep. Rick Larsen



Rep. Barbara Lee



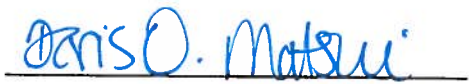
Rep. David Loeb sack



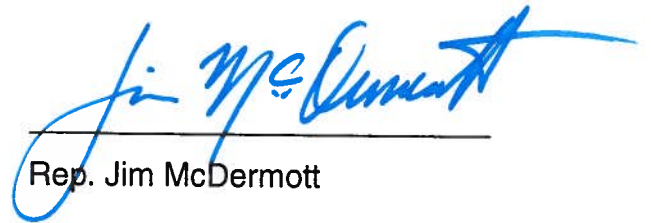
Rep. Zoe Lofgren



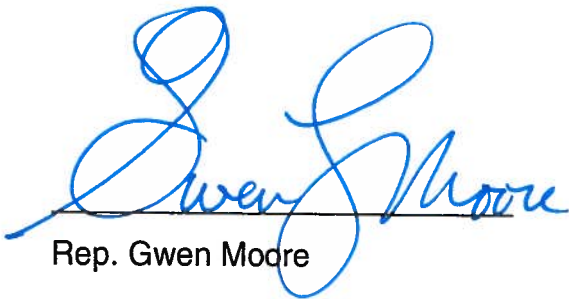
Rep. Dan Maffei



Rep. Doris Matsui



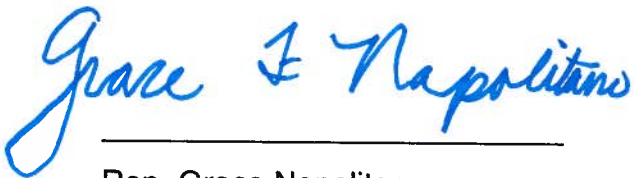
Rep. Jim McDermott



Rep. Gwen Moore



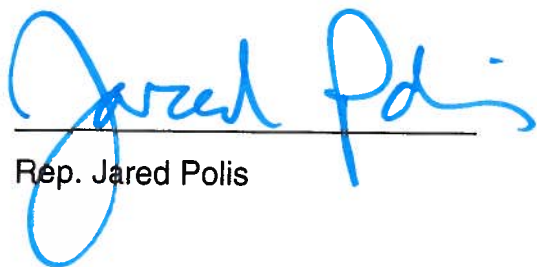
Rep. Jerrold Nadler



Rep. Grace Napolitano



Rep. Pedro Pierluisi



Rep. Jared Polis



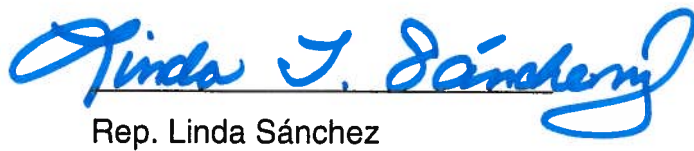
Rep. David Price

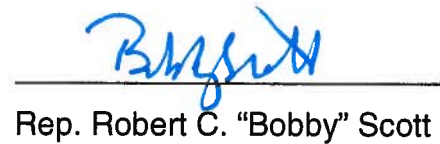

Rep. Charles Rangel

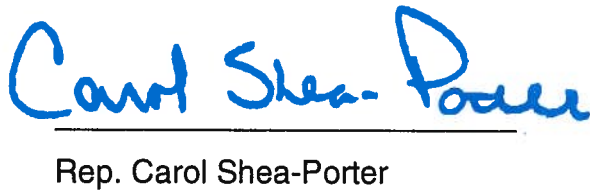

Rep. Laura Richardson


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Rep. Gregorio "Kilili" Sablan


Rep. Linda Sánchez


Rep. Robert C. "Bobby" Scott


Rep. Carol Shea-Porter


Rep. Brad Sherman



Rep. Albio Sires

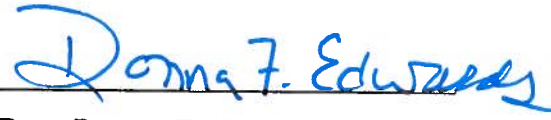

Rep. Fortney "Pete" Stark

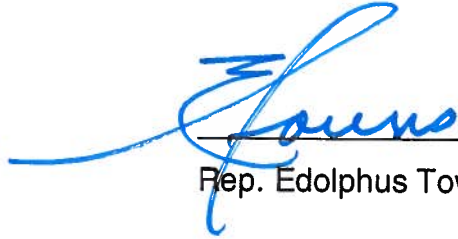

Rep. Betty Sutton

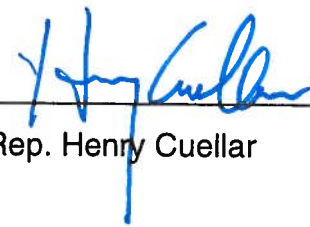

Rep. Paul Tonko

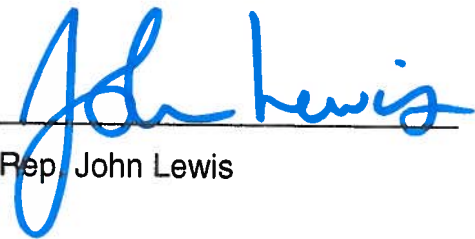

Rep. Chris Van Hollen



Rep. David Wu


Rep. Donna F. Edwards


Rep. Edolphus Towns


Rep. Henry Cuellar


Rep. John Lewis


Rep. Diane Watson