

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 17, 2018

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary of Education
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

As the U.S. Department of Education (“Department”) moves forward to implement the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018* (P.L. 115-141), we urge you to take steps to reduce the significant number of student parents in higher education that do not have access to affordable child care and should benefit from this legislation’s \$34.9 million increase for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program.

The CCAMPIS program helps to meet the urgent needs of student parents enrolled in higher education who are working to attain a college degree or workforce training that will provide economic security for themselves and for their children. Approximately 1.4 million Pell Grant recipients today have children under the age of five, and 4.8 million students in higher education have dependent children. These astounding numbers reveal that nearly one-quarter of all college students nationwide are raising a dependent child.^[1]

Student parents struggle to pay for child care services on top of tuition, fees and other costs. Unfortunately, most students are not able to access existing child care programs, their options are often unaffordable, and child care centers located on campus are rare or have substantial wait lists. To help address these challenges, the CCAMPIS program supports campus-based child care programs primarily serving the needs of low-income students, helping to support intergenerational economic mobility. However, for the past 15 years, funding for the CCAMPIS program remained largely level and was only able to meet a tiny fraction of the student demand for affordable and high-quality on-campus child care. This year, the *Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2018* provided more than a 233 percent increase to CCAMPIS funding, taking a step in the right direction to meeting more of the vast unmet demand for on-campus child care from millions of student parents.


^[1] Noll, E., Reichlin, L. and Gault, B. Institute for Women’s Policy Research. College Students with Children: National and Regional Profiles. January 30, 2017.

Therefore, we urge you to move swiftly to open a new grant competition for CCAMPIS that will expand the number of college campuses and students that receive support through the program. Additionally, consistent with the program's longstanding targeting toward student parents who are low-income, we ask that you ensure this grant competition continues to prioritize applications that will create or expand support services for student parents with the least financial means, particularly first-generation students, low-income students, students of color, and those pursuing their first college degree or credential. Given that federal funds were appropriated more than five months into Fiscal Year 2018, it is important that the Department move rapidly to assist students. Taking action to open this grant competition as soon as possible will help to ensure that campuses have adequate time to plan for the child care support services they will be able to offer in the upcoming 2018-19 academic year. Thank you for your prompt attention to this matter.


Sincerely,



Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator




Patty Murray
United States Senator




Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator




Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



Tina Smith
United States Senator




Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



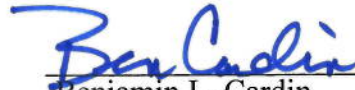
Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator



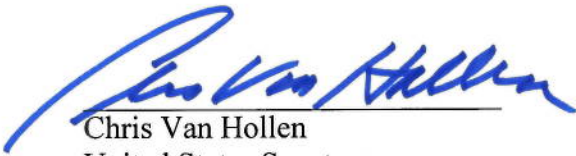
Doug Jones
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



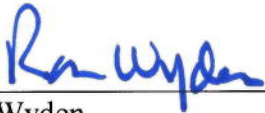
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