



To Whom It May Concern:

On behalf of the California Association of Financial Aid Administrators (CASFAA), representing 1,130 financial aid professionals throughout the state, we wish to express our support for the Biden Administration's Build Back Better Act. The bill includes a \$550 increase of the Federal Pell Grant, a cause CASFAA has championed. However, we are concerned about the provision of the bill excluding this increase for students of proprietary institutions.

For nearly fifty years, the Federal Pell Grant program has been vital to the expansion of access for historically-underrepresented students. Over 260,000 students, of whom 56% are low-income or minority students<sup>1</sup> attending California's 276 proprietary colleges<sup>2</sup>. Of this group, more than 124,000 received \$514 million in Federal Pell Grants<sup>3</sup>. Excluding these students from this increase in critical funding will place unnecessary burden on them and hinder their ability to attain their educational goals.

In addition to causing an additional burden on a significant segment of minority and first-generation students, the exclusion of proprietary students from the recent increase in Federal Pell Grants will also present complications for the Financial Aid offices of these institutions. Distinguishing Pell eligibility by institution will create an administrative challenge to financial aid administrators and potentially hinder the equitable and efficient distribution of aid.

CASFAA urges Congressional leadership to ensure that this segment of California's higher education students are not deprived of this critical component of financial aid by revising the bill in its current form.

Respectfully yours,

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<sup>1</sup> 2019 American Community Survey (ACS), U.S. Census Bureau; The Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS); U.S. Department of Education.

<sup>2</sup> [https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/search/?state=CA&control=profit&page=0&sort=completion\\_rate:desc&toggle=institutions](https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/search/?state=CA&control=profit&page=0&sort=completion_rate:desc&toggle=institutions)

<sup>3</sup> Federal Pell Grant Program Data Books, "Federal Pell Grant Program 2017-2018 End of the Year Report". Table 21