



★ FROM THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT ★

February 16, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C., 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington D.C., 20515

Dear Speaker Boehner and Minority Leader Pelosi,

On behalf of the National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA), I write to express opposition to H.R. 1, which would reduce the maximum Pell Grant Award for the 2011-12 academic year. NASFAA represents more than 18,000 financial aid professionals who serve 16 million students each year at 2,800 colleges and universities throughout the country. The current continuing resolution (P.L. 111-322) provides sufficient Pell Grant program funding to ensure a \$5,550 maximum grant level for the 2011-12 academic year. However, language in H.R. 1 calls for an \$845 reduction to the maximum Pell Grant award—resulting in a \$4,705 maximum award instead of \$5,550. Reducing the Pell Grant to this level will have a detrimental impact on low-income students.

On February 1, as required by law, the U.S. Department of Education released the 2011-12 Pell Grant payment schedules—a guide that schools use to determine Pell Grant awards for students. Schools have begun packaging and offering student aid funds for the 2011-12 year using the recently published payment schedules. By March 4—when the CR is scheduled to end—many students will have already received their award packages and will be making their postsecondary plans accordingly. Any changes to Pell funding at this point could disrupt, delay, or halt low-income students and families' higher education aspirations. To prevent this, Congress must vote down H.R. 1 in order to stop the \$845 cut to the Pell Grant maximum award.

The Pell Grant program continues to be the cornerstone of the federal student aid programs and millions of students will be relying on Congress to ensure its funding. Thank you for your continued support of the Pell Grant program and all you do for students and families.

Sincerely,

Justin Draeger
President and CEO