

ASSOCIATION of
JESUIT COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES
AJCU

August 6, 2020

BOSTON COLLEGE, MA
CANISIUS COLLEGE, NY
COLLEGE OF THE HOLY CROSS, MA
CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY, NE
FAIRFIELD UNIVERSITY, CT
FORDHAM UNIVERSITY, NY
GEORGETOWN UNIVERSITY, DC
GONZAGA UNIVERSITY, WA
JOHN CARROLL UNIVERSITY, OH
LE MOYNE COLLEGE, NY
LOYOLA MARYMOUNT UNIVERSITY, CA
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY CHICAGO, IL
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY MARYLAND, MD
LOYOLA UNIVERSITY NEW ORLEANS, LA
MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY, WI
REGIS UNIVERSITY, CO
ROCKHURST UNIVERSITY, MO
SAINT JOSEPH'S UNIVERSITY, PA
SAINT LOUIS UNIVERSITY, MO
SAINT PETER'S UNIVERSITY, NJ
SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY, CA
SEATTLE UNIVERSITY, WA
SPRING HILL COLLEGE, AL
UNIVERSITY OF DETROIT MERCY, MI
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO, CA
UNIVERSITY OF SCRANTON, PA
XAVIER UNIVERSITY, OH

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker of the House
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-305, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-230, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Room H-204, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
Room S-221, The Capitol
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker Pelosi, Minority Leader McCarthy, Majority Leader McConnell and
Minority Leader Schumer,

As Congress works to address the needs of the nation during the coronavirus pandemic, I write to you on behalf of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) to ask for your consideration of our priorities in the next COVID supplemental bill. Specifically, we are requesting that Congress provide needed funding to colleges and universities (at least \$46.6 billion); ensure all students impacted by the coronavirus are eligible for emergency funds (including student Veterans and DACA recipients); distribute emergency funds using the formula in the CARES Act; and, finally, include the TREAT Act (S. 4421) in a final supplemental spending bill.

AJCU represents fifteen doctoral universities, ten master's colleges and universities, and two baccalaureate colleges in eighteen states and the District of Columbia as well as a junior college in Belize, which became our 28th member institution (June 2020). Our institutions enroll approximately 216,000 students, 90% of whom receive government or institutional grant aid to support their studies. On our campuses, nearly a quarter of our students are Pell Grant recipients (23%) and our graduation rates (six year of 76%) are higher than the national average. Since 1540, Jesuit institutions have made providing access to education for those underrepresented in higher education, and caring for each person within their campus communities, central to their mission. This commitment to seek the common good has guided their response during this time of great challenge for our nation.

AJCU has joined the higher education community on a number of recent letters outlining specific requests in the Phase IV supplemental funding bill such as: funding of at least \$46.6 billion for colleges and universities: flexibility in the “uses of funds” and in defining an eligible student (to ensure that student Veterans and DACA recipients are eligible for assistance); temporary and limited liability protections for colleges and universities related to the Coronavirus pandemic; expansion of the Paycheck Protection (PPP) and Main Street Lending programs (with a specific request to not include students in the overall employee count); and changes to specific tax provisions (e.g. employee refundable payroll tax credit and healthy workplace refundable tax credit). AJCU is on the record in support of these and other requests and considers them crucial to supporting students with increased financial need; prioritizing public health; getting our institutions back to a place of financial stability; and positioning them to contribute to the rebuilding, recovery and vitality of our local communities.

The request for at least \$46.6 billion in grant funding in the next stimulus bill represents just a portion of the revenue losses and costs incurred by institutions (both realized and anticipated) in preparing for the upcoming semester. The formula established in the CARES Act should be used once again to distribute federal dollars: this formula is appropriately weighted toward Pell recipients (thus putting an emphasis on economically disadvantaged students), while recognizing the compounded and costly responsibilities that residential colleges and universities have in keeping their communities safe. For example: our colleges must reconfigure their spaces for learning, housing and dining to accommodate social distancing. Further, all of our campuses have had to plan for and provide quarantine accommodations in the event that a student (or students) gets sick. The CARES formula thus fairly weighs these additional safety considerations, as well as massive losses (e.g. refunds of room and board) from the Spring 2020 semester.

We also ask Congress to ensure that all enrolled students are eligible for federal higher education relief dollars. Institutions should have the latitude to assist all students with financial need, including student Veterans and DACA recipients. We encourage Congress to authorize flexibility in the “uses of funds” to ensure that institutions of higher education can thoughtfully use federal dollars to support student and institutional needs.

Finally, AJCU hopes that Congress will include the Temporary Reciprocity to Ensure Access to Treatment Act (or TREAT Act) in the supplemental bill. This legislation, introduced this week by Senators Roy Blunt (R-MO) and Christopher Murphy (D-CT), provides temporary licensing reciprocity for all practitioners or professionals, including those who treat both physical and mental health conditions, in all states for all types of services (in-person and telehealth). Early in the pandemic last spring, AJCU identified concerns with state licensing laws that created barriers for students who had transitioned to virtual learning and sought services from college counseling centers. Our presidents outlined these considerations in an op-ed in [The Hill](#) in April, and have since continued their advocacy on this particular issue.

The support that Congress provided to the AJCU institutions through the CARES Act was a lifeline for our students and our schools. The nation has been buoyed by the results of your cooperation and again looks to you for leadership.

Sincerely,



Rev. Michael J. Garanzini, S.J.
President, AJCU