



Larry Hogan  
Governor

Boyd K. Rutherford  
Lt. Governor

Andrew R. Smarick  
Chair

James D. Fielder, Jr., Ph. D.  
Secretary

The Honorable Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senate  
509 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Christopher Van Hollen  
United States Senate  
110 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Steny H. Hoyer  
Majority Leader  
H-107, U.S. Capitol  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger  
United States House of Representatives  
2206 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Sarbanes  
United States House of Representatives  
2370 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Andy Harris, M.D.  
United States House of Representatives  
2334 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Anthony Brown  
United States House of Representatives  
1323 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jamie Raskin  
United States House of Representatives  
2242 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable David Trone  
United States House of Representatives  
1110 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Kweisi Mfume  
United States House of Representatives  
2263 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

March 29, 2021

Dear Members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation:

Thank you so much for your longstanding leadership and partnership in helping to ensure that financial obstacles do not impede students from pursuing higher education opportunities. As leaders of our higher education sector in Maryland, we write to urge you to continue this commitment to our lowest-income students by **doubling the Pell Grant maximum award**. Further, we encourage you to make this award an entitlement.

For the 2018-2019 academic year, more than 95,000 Maryland students (about 27% of total undergraduate enrollment) received a Pell Grant (who attended both public and private postsecondary institutions in the State) resulting in over \$353 million dollars in federal student financial aid. Unsurprisingly, these students typically carry disproportionate student loan debt burdens when compared with their higher-income peers. We believe that there is no greater step that could be taken to increase access and success for so many low-income, first generation, and underrepresented minority students.

As you are aware, President Biden has made the doubling of the Pell Grant one of his early priorities. Next year, June 23, 2022 marks the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pell Grant Program. It would be a great tribute

to honor this event by increasing the Pell Grant award in such a meaningful way and tying the legacy of the Pell Grant Program to the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress and the current Administration.

We truly appreciate your thoughtful consideration of this request! The entire higher education sector in Maryland stands united and ready to assist you in this effort. Please feel free to contact any of us for more specific information regarding Pell Grant recipients at our institutions.

Respectfully submitted,



Dr. James D. Fielder  
Secretary  
Maryland Higher Education Commission



Dr. Bernard J. Sadusky  
Executive Director  
Maryland Association of Community Colleges



Ms. Sara Fidler  
President  
MD Independent College & University Association



Dr. David K. Wilson  
President  
Morgan State University



Dr. Tuajuanda C. Jordan  
President  
St. Mary's College of Maryland



Dr. Jay A. Perman  
Chancellor  
University System of Maryland