

To: Rep. Seth Magaziner
From: Kyra
CC: Emily, Noah, Jess
RE: FINAL Remarks for Appropriations LHHS Member Day Hearing
Date: 3/3/2025

☒ Noah

☒ Emily

☒ Jess

[Introduction]

- Chair Aderholt, Ranking Member DeLauro, and members of the Committee - Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today.
- I am here today to advocate for two programs that are absolutely essential in building a competitive workforce and providing opportunity to the next generation of talented young Americans..

[Pell Grant]

- Federal Pell Grants – named after former Rhode Island Senator Clairborne Pell who created them – have opened the door to higher education for millions of low- and middle- income students to access higher education.
- No young person who has the grades, the work ethic and the ambition to go to college, should be denied the opportunity just because their parents don't make a lot of money.

- And if we are going to compete with China and the rest of the world in the global economy, we need a workforce with 21st century skills.
- Approximately 6 million students received Pell Grants in the 2023-2024 school year, and the majority of those grants went to students whose families make less than \$20,000 per year.
- However, the value of the Pell Grant is not keeping up with the rising cost of tuition and cost of living.
- Today, Pell Grants cover less than one-third the average cost of attendance at a public four-year university - they used to cover around 80%.
- In fact, the maximum Pell grant amount has only been increased by \$1,665 over the last decade.
- Last year I led 126 of our colleagues in calling for the Pell grant to be doubled and indexed to inflation, and I plan to do so again this year
- Restoring the Pell Grant's purchasing power will not only make college more affordable, but improve outcomes by providing grant recipients more opportunity to focus on school by covering their basic needs.

- We must increase funding for the Pell Grant so that the next generation of Americans has access to the education they deserve.

[CTE]

- I also urge this committee to increase funding for Career and Technical Education Innovation and Modernization grants.
- There is more than one path to success in this county, and we need to support a range of different education and job training opportunities, including for those kids who are eager to enter the job market, or who may not want to attend four-year college.
- Career and Technical Education can prepare young people for good paying jobs in a range of growing fields, like health care, manufacturing, and the skilled trades.
- Students want these programs.
 - In Rhode Island, career and technical education programs have been so successful that the demand is larger than the number of spots available.
 - More than half of Rhode Island public high school students are participating.

- Innovation and Modernization grants fund research and pilot programs to ensure that career and technical education programs are keeping up with labor market needs.
- They also identify, support, and evaluate evidence-based strategies and activities to improve Career and Technical Education.
 - For example, the Career-Connected High Schools initiative gives students opportunities for hands-on learning, real-life work experience, and opportunities to make progress towards industry credentials or college credits while they are still in high school.
- The needs of employers are constantly changing, and we need to ensure that Career and Technical Education programs are constantly adapting to meet those needs, so that students know that there is a good job likely to be waiting for them when they finish their program.
- Last year I led 31 of my colleagues in sending this committee a letter in support of \$64.4 million for CTE Innovation and Modernization grants, and I look forward to doing so again this year.

- I am glad that career and technical education has historically had robust support in the House of Representatives, and I am optimistic that we can continue to work together on this important bipartisan issue.

[Conclusion]

- Finally, we must acknowledge that just last week, House Republicans passed a budget bill that directs the Education and Workforce Committee to make cuts of at least \$330 billion in order to pay for tax cuts that will disproportionately benefit the rich.
- And President Trump has repeatedly stated his intentions to dismantle the Department of Education.
- We cannot sell out America's students and employers by gutting education and job training.
- I ask my colleagues to take education off of the chopping block, and instead invest in providing opportunities to the next generation, including through expanding Pell Grants and Career and Technical Education.
- Thank you for your consideration, and I yield back.