



October 22, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chair  
Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Labor,  
Health and Human Services, Education  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

On behalf of the Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) and the 569 Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs) located in 28 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico that it represents, I am writing to underscore the **urgency of markedly increasing the proposed Fiscal Year (FY) 2022 funding levels for HSIs under the Senate Labor-HHS-Education (L-HHS-Ed) Appropriations**. To properly educate and serve their students equitably, increased funding for these critical programs is a dire need for HSIs that have been severely underfunded for decades.

HSIs represent one of the main drivers for our national recovery and prosperity in the age of COVID-19 and beyond. As the number of HSIs grew from 311 in 2010 to 569 in 2019, their critical role in educating a diverse pool of students has considerably increased. Although HSIs account for 17% of U.S. colleges and universities, they educate more than two-thirds of the estimated 3.8 million Hispanic college students in the U.S. These HSIs educate the most diverse and neediest college student population of 5.24 million, including more than two of every three Hispanics, one of every four Black students, two of every five Asian Americans, one of every four Native Americans, and sizeable number of non-Hispanic White college students. Yet HSIs remain at the bottom of the federal funding priorities when compared to other Minority-Serving Institutions (MSIs) and Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs).

Below is HACU's proposed funding for HSIs addressing decades of underfunding that has been further exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Without these funds, HSIs will struggle to prepare their students for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century workforce.

### **Aid for Institutional Development**

- **Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (Title V, Part A):** A total of \$250 million, an increase of \$101.3 million from FY 2021, which is \$23.5 million above the Senate's FY 2022 appropriations bill.
- **Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans (Title V, Part B):** A total of \$50 million, an increase of \$36.2 million from FY 2021, which is \$22.9 million above the Senate's FY 2022 appropriations bill.

### **Student Aid**

**Pell Grants:** The Pell Grant has not kept up with the rising cost of college. The proposed \$400 increase is vital to easing the financial burden for the 33% of all Pell recipients who attend HSIs. Eligibility should also be expanded to DACA and Temporary Protected Status (TPS) students, similar to the House bill.

As you consider the FY 2022 funding for L-HHS-Ed, I urge you to increase the funding for HSIs and extend Pell Grant eligibility to DACA and TPS students. As we rebuild the economy after the COVID-19 pandemic, it is critical that existing federal investments strengthen our workforce by enhancing the educational infrastructure of HSIs, paving a path of success and opportunity for all students that HSIs educate and serve. The proposed funding increases above will help the entirety of the diverse student population that HSIs educate.

Thank you for considering this request. I am ready to work with you and to serve as a resource. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [antonio.flores@hacu.net](mailto:antonio.flores@hacu.net) or at 210-576-3214.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Antonio Flores". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Antonio" being larger and more prominent than the last name "Flores".

Antonio R. Flores  
President and CEO