July 8, 2021

The Honorable Patty Murray                                      The Honorable Roy Blunt
Chair                                                          Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations
136 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

We write to thank you for your strong support of the Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO) and to request that you provide robust funding for these programs in the fiscal year (FY) 2022 Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations bill. In recent years, the Committee has provided strong support for the TRIO programs and the students they serve: low-income, first-generation students, students with disabilities, homeless youths, students in or exiting foster care, military veterans, English learners, unemployed adults, and students in rural communities.

As you prepare your FY 2022 appropriations bill, we ask that you prioritize the academic, financial, and social supports provided by TRIO so that these students can benefit from these life-changing services.

The COVID-19 crisis has challenged every stage of our nation’s education system, thus making the need for targeted investments in TRIO all the more urgent. In fall 2020, the college enrollment rate of students from high-poverty high schools plunged nearly one-third lower than the year before. Meanwhile, U.S. Census data reported that students in low-income families are twice as likely to drop out of community college during this crisis. As TRIO programs seek to address these challenges, we urge the Committee to continue to prioritize TRIO funding to help ensure students are prepared for, persist in, and graduate from college.

In FY22, the Department of Education will host grant competitions for four TRIO programs: Upward Bound, Upward Bound Math-Science, Veterans Upward Bound, and Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement. Upward Bound provides high school students with tutoring, mentoring and college counseling during the school year and a six-week residential college experience, all with the aim of improving college enrollment and attainment. Upward Bound Math-Science uses a similar model, with the goal of encouraging participants to pursue postsecondary degrees and careers in STEM fields. Veterans Upward Bound provides academic tutoring and counseling to help support military veterans’ enrollment in and completion of postsecondary education. Finally, the Ronald E. McNair Postbaccalaureate Achievement program provides undergraduates with opportunities for research, internships, seminars, tutoring, and academic counseling, with the goal of students from disadvantaged backgrounds earning doctoral degrees.

We appreciate the Committee’s continued commitment to TRIO. Given the programs’ proven success and the need to address higher education access, affordability, and completion, we respectfully request your support of robust funding for TRIO in FY 2022.
Sincerely,

Susan M. Collins  United States Senator
Jon Tester  United States Senator
Tammy Baldwin  United States Senator

/S/
Mike Crapo  United States Senator

/S/
Jeffrey A. Merkley  United States Senator

/S/
Raphael G. Warnock  United States Senator

/S/
Michael F. Bennet  United States Senator

Richard Blumenthal  United States Senator
Cory A. Booker  United States Senator
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator

Robert P. Casey, Jr.  
United States Senator

Bill Cassidy  
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons  
United States Senator

/S/  
Bill Cassidy  
United States Senator

John Cornyn  
United States Senator

Catherine Cortez Masto  
United States Senator

Kevin Cramer  
United States Senator
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator

Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator

Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator

Martin Heinrich
United States Senator

John Hickenlooper
United States Senator

Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator

Tim Kaine
United States Senator
Gary C. Peters
United States Senator

Jack Reed
United States Senator

Jacky Rosen
United States Senator

Bernard Sanders
United States Senator

Brian Schatz
United States Senator

Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator

Kyrsten Sinema
United States Senator

Tina Smith
United States Senator

Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator

Dan Sullivan
United States Senator