

THE CLAREMONT COLLEGES

March 21, 2020

Senator Dianne Feinstein
United States Senate
331 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: Urgent Action Needed: Contact Congress on Coronavirus Stimulus Bill; Funding for Colleges and Students at Stake

Dear Senator Feinstein:

The students, faculty, and staff at our colleges and universities are uniquely vulnerable to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our educational and research missions require close interactions in classrooms, labs, the arts, athletics, residential life, and engaging contributions to our local, national, and global communities. The forced move to social distancing and remote instruction has imposed painful disruption, health and economic concerns for our students, faculty, and staff, and deep economic costs and risk.

On March 13, President Trump declared a national emergency. On the same day, he issued an emergency order waiving student loan interest. Congress is currently drafting a stimulus bill. The seven independent institutions of The Claremont Colleges strongly endorse the proposed measures to provide:

- Emergency aid to students and institutions, disbursed directly through the existing Pell Grant disbursement system;
- New zero-interest loans to replace short-term revenue disruptions and expenses incurred due to the pandemic;
- A \$7.8 billion technology implementation fund to ensure that students and faculty are supported in the transition to distance learning;
- Temporary suspension of certain statutory and regulatory requirements and deadlines that currently hinder our ability to assist students and deliver coursework; and
- Tax relief to students and institutions, including enhancements to charitable giving rules to stimulate private philanthropy and changes in endowment tax law that would free institutional funds for crisis spending.

All sectors of the economy are affected by the pandemic. The impact on higher education will reverberate far beyond our campuses and for generations to come. The sustainability of our society, economy, and democracy all rely heavily on this generation's ability to learn effectively. The intensive form of education we offer drives the development of our national economy, effective policy, and a strong civil society, and is key to our country's global competitiveness. We are also major employers in our region, and serve as an economic, civic, and cultural hub for our community.

For each and all of these reasons, we urge you to support higher education in this stimulus bill.

Regards,



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Len Jessup
President
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