

Caring for younger siblings.

Dear [Senator/Representative Last Name],

I am an honor student at [fill in the name of your college here]—and I help care for my younger siblings while my parents work full-time jobs. I'm writing because the proposed changes to the Pell Grant program would make it almost impossible for me—and many students like me—to stay in college.

My parents work hard, but like so many families, we can't afford childcare. That means I'm the one making sure my siblings get to school, get fed, get help with homework, and stay safe. I do this while working a part-time job and going to college part-time—usually two or three classes at a time—because that's all I can manage.

It's not that I can't do the work. I make straight A's. I love learning. But I cannot attend full-time because my family needs me.

The Pell Grant helps me afford college. But under the new reconciliation bill, students who aren't enrolled in at least 15 credit hours would no longer get the full award—they would only receive 80% of what they previously qualified for. And those of us taking fewer than 7.5 credit hours—even two classes—would get nothing at all.

That doesn't reduce support—it takes it away completely.

And now there's a proposal to tax the Pell Grant, too. That money doesn't go into my pocket. It goes directly to my education. Taxing it punishes students for using the only financial help many of us receive.

Our family is doing everything we can to make ends meet. I'm doing everything I can to build a future. But these changes hurt me. They don't make college more accessible—they make it unreachable.

I am not failing. Your policies are failing students like me.

Please, don't pass legislation that pushes honor students out of school because they are also caregivers. Keep the Pell Grant strong, and make sure it works for students with real responsibilities and real dreams.

Sincerely,