

Faculty Letter

Dear [Representatives and Senators],

I am a faculty member at [COLLEGE] in [CITY/ST] and I'm writing to urge you to protect the Pell Grant from the harmful changes proposed in the reconciliation bill.

The proposed changes to Pell will harm students – short and simple. As a Pell recipient myself when I attended College, I worked throughout my college education —not because I wanted to delay college, but because I had to support myself like so many of our community college students who take two or three classes each semester and work hard to maintain their GPA. These resilient and dedicated students find ways to balance work and school, and I'm proud of what they've accomplished. But now, those students attending part-time are being told they don't deserve full support. Worse—some of them won't get any support at all.

Under this bill, students taking fewer than 7.5 credit hours will lose Pell Grant eligibility entirely. That means if a student takes two classes while working full-time, they receive nothing. And even those taking 12 to 14 credit hours would no longer qualify for the full award—they would only receive 80% of what they previously qualified for. That isn't a reduction—it's a denial of opportunity. These are not just policy tweaks—they are punishments for students trying to survive and stay enrolled.

And now there's a proposal to tax the Pell Grant. That aid goes straight to tuition, textbooks, and gas to get to class. Taxing it as if it is income just takes more from those who already have the least.

I want to be very clear and communicate that financial aid should not only go to students who don't work. That's not the world we live in. Most community college students do work at least part-time. Our community's college students are the ones keeping businesses running, supporting families, and contributing to the economy while attending school. Why are they being penalized for doing exactly what society says they should—work hard, stay enrolled, and aim higher?

Please oppose these changes. Keep the Pell Grant strong, flexible, and fair—because working students deserve a future too.

Sincerely,