



July 22, 2014

The Honorable Brett Guthrie
U.S. House of Representatives
308 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Guthrie:

On behalf of the nearly 760,000 low-income, first-generation students and students with disabilities served by the Federal TRIO Programs, I write to express strong support of H.R. 4984, the Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act.

This legislation takes care to provide students with critical information about the financial obligations to which they commit themselves and their families throughout their higher education. In doing so, this bill takes an important step toward enabling students and families to make more informed choices that will allow them to avoid future encumbrances by unexpected and overwhelming debt burdens. We are also pleased that H.R. 4984 explains the various facets of the Pell Grant program to ensure full awareness of students who rely primarily on that program for financial support. It is noteworthy that the institutions that serve student populations most in need of such counseling services may need additional supports in order to meet the benchmarks set out in this bill. By allowing for the use of an online counseling tool, H.R. 4984 addresses the concerns of under-staffed institutions with a high volume of financial aid recipients.

As you know, the mission of the Federal TRIO Programs is to ensure that students from low-income families – including students with disabilities, students of colors, and military veterans – are able to enroll and graduate from postsecondary education programs. A fundamental component of this mandate is financial aid counseling and financial literacy coaching for students and families. As our TRIO educators must work diligently to stay abreast of the latest developments within financial aid, we are well aware of the need to provide ongoing guidance to aid recipients. As such, we are very pleased to support this legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Maureen Hoyler".

Maureen Hoyler
President