

A Call to Reforge the Historic Compact Between Higher Education and the Federal Government

The longstanding partnership between the federal government and colleges and universities has made American higher education the envy of the world and an engine of national progress and prosperity. All Americans, whether they went to college or not, have benefited from this compact. The results are embedded in the smartphones they hold in their hands, the cars they drive, the medical care they receive when they need it most, and the inventions that power our world-leading economy.

The undersigned associations represent those colleges and universities and the communities they serve. On behalf of tens of millions of students, educators, researchers, and administrators nationwide, we oppose recent government actions that jeopardize this partnership. We urge the administration to work with us to reforge this compact and advance our shared national interests.

The entire country benefits when policymakers and higher education leaders respect a common understanding of the vital role colleges and universities play in advancing the social, cultural, and economic well-being of the United States. Institutions welcome and support students from all backgrounds; compete to train and support the best researchers; and work to meet the needs of our government and the public. In turn, the government has always respected the rights of campuses, enshrined in law, to decide whom they enroll, what they teach, and how they choose to teach.

This balance is dangerously disrupted when billions of dollars in funding for education and competitively awarded research grants are held hostage for political reasons and without due process. Release of funds obligated to institutions should not be conditioned on which students universities admit, what kinds of academic programs they offer, and how they organize and oversee their faculty. Campuses should not be attacked for building communities that reflect their missions and the broad diversity of this country. Students and scholars should not fear deportation just for exercising their right to speak freely.

There is a better way. Higher education can and must improve to earn and maintain the public's trust. But political attacks against higher education only divide and weaken us all. We call on the administration to join with colleges and universities to move forward by renewing and expanding the partnership that is essential for building a stronger America.

Achieving the Dream

ACPA-College Student Educators International

American Association of Colleges and Universities

American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education

American Association of Colleges of Nursing

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers

American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of University Professors

American Association of Veterinary Medical Colleges
American College Health Association
American Council on Education
Association for Institutional Research
Association for Student Conduct Administration
Association for the Advancement of Sustainability in Higher Education
Association for the Study of Higher Education
Association of American Law Schools
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of College and University Housing Officers-International
Association of College Unions International
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Schools and Colleges of Optometry
Association of Schools and Programs of Public Health
Association on Higher Education and Disability
Campus Compact
Complete College America
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council for the Advancement of Standards in Higher Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council on Social Work Education
EDUCAUSE
Higher Education Loan Coalition
Higher Learning Commission
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Middle States Commission on Higher Education
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
NASPA-Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Campus Card Users
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Colleges and Employers
National Association of Diversity Officers in Higher Education
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National Council of University Research Administrators
New England Commission of Higher Education
NIRSA: Leaders in Collegiate Recreation
NODA-Association for Orientation, Transition and Retention in Higher Education
Phi Beta Kappa Society
Society for College and University Planning
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges
UPCEA
WASC Senior College and University Commission