

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 25, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray
Chairwoman
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor, HHS, Education
and Related Agencies
Senate Appropriations Committee
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray and Ranking Member Blunt:

As the subcommittee begins consideration of the Fiscal Year 2023 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies appropriations legislation, we request that you invest in strengthening the connection between high schools, postsecondary education, and careers by supporting early college opportunities, including providing an appropriation of \$200 million for President Biden’s proposed “Career-Connected High Schools” initiative.

Research shows that increasing alignment between high schools and colleges, through measures such as dual enrollment programs and early college high schools, improves college access, affordability and completion.¹ In addition, workers with a postsecondary credential are more likely to succeed in today’s economy, including earning a higher income.² Unfortunately, the pandemic exacerbated existing gaps – most prevalent for first-generation and low-income students – between how prepared high school graduates are for college, and the academic demands of higher education. These disparities have contributed to a double-digit decline in college enrollment rates, including a 32 percent decline for Black students and a 20 percent decline for Latino students in community colleges.³

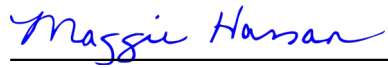
As proposed, the “Career-Connected High Schools” initiative would help increase higher education success, especially for under-served students. We hope that you will provide robust funding for this initiative, and other efforts to support early college access and build a more prepared and competitive workforce across the country. Thank you for considering this request to help ensure that our nation’s students and future leaders have the tools that they need to succeed.

Sincerely,

¹ American Institutes for Research (AIR) long-standing study analyzing the benefits of Early College High Schools. <https://www.air.org/project/evaluating-impact-early-college-high-schools>, What Works Clearinghouse study on Dual Enrollment Programs. <https://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/InterventionReport/671>

² Three Educational Pathways to Good Jobs: High School, Middle Skills and Bachelor’s Degree, Center on Education and the Workforce, Georgetown University, 2018. <https://cew.georgetown.edu/cew-reports/3pathways/>

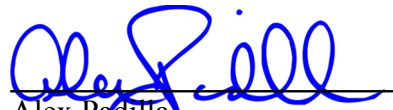
³ National Student Clearinghouse Research Center Data shows a 13% overall decline in freshman enrollment in Fall 2021 versus Fall 2019. <https://nscresearchcenter.org/stay-informed/>



Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



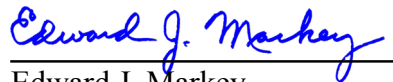
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United States Senator



Alex Padilla
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator