



September 22, 2016

The Honorable Ron Kind
Chair, New Democrat Coalition
U.S. House of Representatives
1502 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kind:

I write to applaud the recently released New Democrats Coalition Higher Education Priorities. In particular, I commend the Coalition for emphasizing not only issues of accessibility and affordability, but also the need for supportive services and inclusivity on college campuses.

Overall, the priorities set forth in the Coalition's agenda tackle systematic problems that hinder progress for our nation's neediest students and propose critical solutions that will promote greater access, retention, and completion for student populations that are grossly underrepresented on college campuses across the country. In particular, we are pleased to see that the plan recognizes the importance of the Federal TRIO Programs in preparing students for college and ensuring that they succeed once enrolled. For more than 50 years, TRIO has provided academic, financial, social, and cultural supportive services to enable students from low-income backgrounds to become the first members of their families to earn college degrees. Having produced 5 million college graduates, TRIO has been proven effective and will continue to bridge the socioeconomic gap through access to opportunity in education.

The reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is the next critical step in ensuring that our nation's workforce is well educated and prepared to compete in a global economy. Through the Coalition's leadership, our nation will succeed in developing a plan that will build this nation's next generation of innovators. We look forward to working with the Members of the New Democrat Coalition to advance the notion of college access and success for first-generation, low-income students for years to come.

Sincerely,

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

Maureen Hoyler
President