

# TRIO ALUMNI CALL TO ACTION

(March 2026)

As alumni of the Federal TRIO Programs, you know how essential the mentorship, tutoring, and guidance provided by TRIO is to students' higher education success. Recently, the [Department of Education proposed programmatic changes to TRIO](#) that steer us away from our mission of college access and transform TRIO into a pipeline for employment training.

Your voice is critical to assuring TRIO's future! Please take a moment to share the impact TRIO has had on your life with your Members of Congress using the template below. (You can find contact information for staff working for your House Representative and Senators here: <https://bit.ly/CapitolHillContactListMarch2026>.) Your advocacy will ensure that thousands of low-income, first-generation students continue to have access to these life-changing opportunities.

**Step 1:** Visit <https://www.congress.gov/members/find-your-member> to identify your House Representative and Senators.

**Step 2: Craft and share your message by phone.** Your message does not have to be lengthy or fanciful. But it must be clear and direct. When you call the office, ask to speak with the education aide. You may get a voicemail or you may be asked to "leave a message" with the front desk. That's ok. Share your message!

Here is a sample phone message:

*"My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I am a constituent from [District/State]. I am also an alum of the Federal TRIO Programs and I am very concerned that the Department of Education is taking steps to transform TRIO from a college access program into an employment training program. I am asking that [Senator/Representative] contact the Secretary of Education today and insist that the agency rescind and revise this proposal and that these changes not be made to TRIO! I also need [Senator/Representative] to tell the Secretary that there must NOT be a lapse in TRIO services, even if that means extending current awards.*

**Step 3: Craft and share your message by email.** It's important to follow up your calls with emails reinforcing your message. Send them to not only the education aide, but also the Legislative Director and District Directors. You can find the email addresses for the staff members for all Members of Congress at <https://bit.ly/CapitolHillContactListMarch2026>.)

Here is a sample email message:

*Dear [Senator/Representative]:*

*My name is [NAME] and from [YEAR] to [YEAR], I participated in [PROGRAM NAME], one of the Federal TRIO Programs, at [SCHOOL NAME]. Today, I am a proud graduate of [INSTITUTION] and work as a [OCCUPATION] in [CITY, STATE].*

*Recently, the U.S. Department of Education proposed sweeping changes to TRIO that threaten its mission of college access and success and attempts to transition TRIO into an employment training program.*

*This is not acceptable.*

*While we certainly have need for citizens in the skilled trades, we also have need for individuals with college degrees who will serve as our educators, doctors, and engineers. I am just one example of the power of TRIO.*

*Without [PROGRAM NAME], I would not be where I am today. I faced many obstacles growing up and honestly never believed college was for me. [Add FAMILY BACKGROUND/CHALLENGES]. Once I joined [PROGRAM NAME], my life changed.*

*[BRIEF STRUGGLE AND PROGRAM IMPACT--e.g., "While juggling work and classes, the program gave me tutoring, mentorship, and emotional support."]*

*My counselors and peers became a second family who pushed me to succeed. Thousands of students like me depend on TRIO. Please reject the Department's actions and fight to ensure that TRIO remains a pathway to college (and beyond) for the thousands of students like me.*

*Sincerely,*

*[Your Name]*

**Step 4: Get five friends to do the same.** Multiply the strength of your efforts and invite five friends, colleagues, and other alumni to engage in these same steps.

**Step 5: Stay in touch and stay active!** Visit [www.coenet.org/for-alumni](http://www.coenet.org/for-alumni) to sign up to join the National TRIO Alumni Association! (It's FREE!) Join thousands of your fellow alumni to engage in professional development webinars, in-person social gatherings, and generally stay up-to-date on all things TRIO!

Through this **collective action** our voices will be heard, our messages will be clear, and we will prevail in our assignment to **#ProtectTRIO!** With any questions or for more information on communicating with your Members of Congress, please reach out to the Council for Opportunity in Education's Vice President of Public Policy, Diane Shust ([diane.shust@coenet.org](mailto:diane.shust@coenet.org)), or Public Policy Associate, Christian Bell ([christian.bell@coenet.org](mailto:christian.bell@coenet.org)).