

September 29, 2022

The Honorable Patty Murray  
Chairwoman  
Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roy Blunt  
Ranking Member  
Senate Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rosa DeLauro  
Chairwoman  
House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tom Cole  
Ranking Member  
House Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies Appropriations  
Subcommittee  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairwoman Murray, Chairwoman DeLauro, Ranking Member Blunt, and Ranking Member Cole:

In celebration of AANAPISI week, we, the undersigned organizations and individuals, wanted to reach out to you to express deep appreciation for the increased federal support AANAPISIs received in the last year, while recognizing the progress that still needs to be made. In particular, the funding increase for AANAPISIs - doubling from around 5 million in FY21 to more than 10 million in FY22 - was unprecedented. This historic investment represents a meaningful commitment needed by Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) students and the AANAPISIs that support them. However, while the funding increase was an important first step in the right direction, it is crucial that Congress builds on its previous efforts and continues to address the historical underfunding of AANAPISIs. Thank you for the proposed increases in the House and Senate FY23 appropriations bills, which both increased funding for AANAPISIs to approximately \$20 million, an 84% increase over the previous year. These proposals demonstrate that members understand the importance of the significant contributions that AANAPISIs make to the students they serve. **We urge you to support a final FY23 appropriations bill at the proposed levels of the House and Senate appropriation committees' markups: \$20 million.** Ultimately, equitable funding of AANAPISIs will require a bigger investment: if Congress were to equitably fund all 199 eligible AANAPISIs at the same level as HSIs, the AANAPISI program would require an annual funding amount of \$100 million. For this reason, we also urge you to support continued funding of AANAPISIs at an equitable funding level to ultimately total **\$100 million under the Higher Education Act Title III and Title V, Parts A and F.** We are requesting this funding increase because AANAPISIs have been chronically underfunded since their establishment. For example, while 199 institutions have been identified by the U.S. Dept. of Education as eligible AANAPISIs, only 30

of those institutions are currently receiving AANAPISI funding given the underfunding of this set of schools and students.

The impact of AANAPISs cannot be understated. AANAPISs enroll over 40% of *all* AA&NHPI undergraduates in the nation, confer 49.4%, of all associate degrees earned by AANHPI college students, and confer 37.1% of all baccalaureate degrees earned by AANHPI students (Nguyen, M.H. et. al).<sup>1</sup> Even further, expanded funding for AANAPISs would also be an important step to combat the explosion in xenophobia and hate crimes against the AANHPI community over the past two years. Due to COVID-19, AANHPI students are experiencing heightened instances of racism and discrimination. Increased funding will aid institutions in being able to understand and respond to the unique challenges faced by AANHPI students today. Current AANAPISI grant recipients—from community colleges to four-year institutions—are implementing important programs to promote student success, including providing tutoring and counseling services, improving retention, graduation, and outreach strategies, and increasing the reflection of AANHPI history and culture in the classroom, for AANHPI and low-income students. As such, we ask for a continued funding commitment to provide the resources that students need to recover and succeed.

AANAPISs provide critical support for AANHPI students by cultivating environments that promote the success of underserved AANHPI students and attending to their distinct needs. With expanded funding for these essential programs in the FY23 appropriations measure, we can give more students and families opportunities to thrive. Thank you for your time and considering this request. If you have further questions, please reach out to APIA Scholars at [AANAPISI@APIAScholars.org](mailto:AANAPISI@APIAScholars.org).

Sincerely,

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<sup>1</sup> Nguyen, M.H., Gogue, D.T.L., Espinoza, K.J.C., Neilson, P., Venturanza, R.J. (2022). *Celebrating 15 Years of Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander-Serving Institutions: Exploring How Colleges and Universities Become AANAPISs; Serve Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander Students; and Institutionalize Their Initiatives*. Washington, DC: APIA Scholars

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