

May 11, 2022



Minnesota Association of
Private College Students

Senator David Tomassoni
328 Capitol Building
75 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Blvd.
St. Paul, MN 55155

Representative Connie Bernardy
563 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Dear Chair Tomassoni, Chair Bernardy, and Conference Committee members:

On behalf of the Minnesota Association of Private College Students (MAPCS), we would like to thank you for your past support of the Minnesota State Grant Program and urge you to increase the grant funding this year. The Minnesota State Grant program provides much needed aid to 44% of Minnesota's public and private college students and drastically changes the outlook for students across the state of Minnesota. Your support has the ability to open the door to higher education for students in need.

At MAPCS, students from 17 private non-profit colleges collaborate monthly to search for ways to assist in and advocate for the improvement of our campuses and the students who attend them. One of our main objectives is to increase the impact of the Minnesota State Grant to support more students. The proposed reduction of the student share from 50% to 48% would help greatly reduce the financial burden placed on students and their families. To give an example, this funding would allow for a \$534 increase for University of Minnesota and private college State Grant recipients, a \$433 increase for students at Minnesota State universities, and a \$357 increase for State Grant recipients at two-year institutions. For this reason, we believe continued new investment in the Minnesota State Grant program is a crucial step.

While we are extremely grateful for the investment that has been made in the Minnesota State Grant program thus far, we see a great demand from students who need the crucial support of the State Grant program, especially given the effects of COVID-19. COVID-19 affected people across Minnesota, but college students and their families suffered a harsh financial hit.

When students receive the Minnesota State Grant, they not only obtain the financial assistance needed to be successful in higher education but also the backing of a state government which encourages them to achieve their dreams. Students who are underrepresented in higher education are given a chance to beat statistics and succeed. Currently, 59% of Minnesota students of color and Native American students who attend college in the state receive a State Grant award.

We believe that an investment in the Minnesota State Grant program is an investment in the future of Minnesota and our nation. It is an investment in equity. Because of your support, children can become students and students can become leaders — leaders that are needed in our schools, workforce, and communities.

In addition to supporting students through the Minnesota State Grant program, we also ask for your support to help make significant strides toward eliminating food insecurity on our college campuses. The House higher education bill includes language to allow private non-profit colleges to be eligible for small grants and an increase in the appropriation to support all college students as a part of the Hunger Free Campus Act. Public colleges and universities have access to resources to eradicate hunger on each of

their campuses and it is important that students at private non-profit colleges also can access these resources to get food on their tables. With this designation, students can focus less on struggling to have their basic needs met and more on their studies and professional development.

We thank you for your investment and we look forward to continuing conversations with you about increasing State Grants for our students to create leaders such as yourself and those around you.

With great regards,

Jonathon Krull, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, MAPCS Chair
Dylan Monahan, University of St. Thomas, MAPCS Legislative Affairs Chair
Joseph González, Concordia University, St. Paul, Vice President of Student Relations & Affairs
Riley Hall, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Student Senate Vice President of Public Affairs
Ayana Smith-Kooiman, Macalester College, Community Engagement Officer
Carol Hei Yue Lee, Augsburg University, Vice President of Augsburg Day Student Government
Blake Birno, Bethel University, Student Body President
Emily Liebl, The College of St. Scholastica, Student Body Vice President
Benjamin Menke, Gustavus Adolphus College, Student Senate Co-President
Regina Olono Vidales, Gustavus Adolphus College, Student Senate Co-President
Birgen Nelson, Gustavus Adolphus College, Student Senate Co-President

cc:

Senator Rarick	Representative Christensen
Senator Jasinski	Representative Klevorn
Senator Housley	Representative Keeler
Senator Clausen	Representative O'Neill

Governor Tim Walz
Lt. Governor Peggy Flanagan
Commissioner Dennis Olson, Jr., Office of Higher Education
Aara Johnson, Senior Policy Advisor, Governor Walz's Office
Senate Majority Leader Jeremy Miller
Senate Minority Leader Melisa López Franzen
House Speaker Melissa Hortman
House Majority Leader Ryan Winkler
House Minority Leader Kurt Daudt