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Nicholas P. Jones
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I write on behalf of the University of Illinois System to express our strong concerns about the spending cuts included in some of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2024 spending bills drafted by the House Appropriations Committee. While we recognize the fiscal challenges facing Congress, the cuts included in those appropriations bills would have a profoundly damaging impact on our students and researchers, and on the State of Illinois as a whole.

We are particularly concerned about the proposed elimination of funding for the Federal Work-Study and the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) programs in the draft FY2024 Labor, Health and Human Services, Education and Related Agencies (Labor/HHS/ED) bill. These campus-based aid programs provide crucial support for large numbers of our students. Over 7,600 students across the U of I System with exceptional financial need received \$4.2 million in SEOG funding in 2021-22, while over 2,100 U of I System students participated in the Federal Work-Study program. In addition, while we are very grateful that the draft Labor/HHS/ED bill did not propose cuts to the Pell Grant program, we sincerely hope that Congress will increase spending for the program, as it has done every year since 2012. In Academic Year 2021-2022, nearly 21,500 students across the U of I System received \$105.8 million in Pell Grants.

In addition, proposed cuts to federal research funding would undermine the ability of our faculty to continue making the scientific and medical breakthroughs that drive our state and the nation forward. The draft Labor/HHS/ED bill, for example, would cut funding for the National Institutes of Health (NIH) by \$2.8 billion. The University of Illinois Chicago (UIC) is a leading recipient of NIH funding, with \$192 million in NIH research expenditures in FY2022. NIH funding is supporting ongoing UIC efforts to better understand and treat long COVID-19, sickle cell disease, chronic eye disease and many other pressing medical challenges.

Similarly, the draft FY2024 Commerce, Justice, Science and Related Agencies bill proposes to fund the National Science Foundation (NSF) at just \$9.6 billion. While that number is higher than the Senate Appropriations Committee's proposal, it is far below the FY2024 authorized level of \$15.647 billion that Congress approved just last year in the CHIPS and Science Act. The University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign is routinely among the nation's leaders in NSF awards, with \$117.7 million in FY2022 research expenditures that is supporting cutting-edge work in quantum fields, artificial intelligence and a host of other areas that are vital to economic development and national security.

We strongly urge the House of Representatives to ensure that the agencies and programs that provide crucial support to our students and researchers receive the funding levels requested in our [previous advocacy](#). Our futures depend on it.

Sincerely,

Nicholas Jones
Executive Vice President and Vice President for Academic Affairs
University of Illinois System