



United States Senate

April 22, 2020

The Honorable Betsy DeVos
Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
400 Maryland Avenue, S.W.
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary DeVos:

As institutions of higher education continue to contend with the impact of the coronavirus pandemic, I write to urge you to expeditiously release the direct assistance for institutions of higher education provided by the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act*.

As you know, Congress intended for this money to directly support students who need access to basic necessities, such as food, housing, and technology in order to continue their education during this challenging time. I was pleased to see your recent announcement regarding the release of \$6.28 billion that will “be distributed immediately to colleges and universities to provide direct emergency cash grants to college students whose lives and educations have been disrupted by the coronavirus outbreak.”

However, based on press reporting, only \$6 million (less than one percent) has actually been distributed since that time. California colleges and universities stand to receive \$1.7 billion in direct assistance for students, and it is concerning to me that many institutions in my state have applied for these funds but have yet to receive them.

I have also heard concerns about the lack of transparency surrounding the distribution of these funds. In order to ensure transparency over these funds, I ask that you establish a database to be updated daily that publicly identifies funding requests and distributions.

Your efforts to provide relief will make a tremendous difference in supporting students who are directly impacted by the coronavirus pandemic as well as the institutions that serve them. Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dianne Feinstein".

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

DF:bp