July 26, 2019

The Hon. Ben McAdams  The Hon. Ronald Wright
U.S. Representative  U.S. Representative
130 Cannon House Office Building  428 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515  Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative McAdams and Representative Wright,

As local, state, and national organizations committed to investing in what works, we are writing to express our strong support for the Fund for Innovation and Success in Higher Education (FINISH) Act.

American colleges and universities have great untapped potential to increase economic opportunity and strengthen our democracy. Yet despite the fact that a growing number of higher education institutions and their partners have developed an increasing number of evidence-based solutions, we must accelerate this progress more broadly across the country.

We commend you for introducing the FINISH Act, which would leverage the power of evidence and innovation to improve outcomes in higher education. Specifically, we appreciate the inclusion of provisions in your legislation that would:

- Create a tiered-evidence innovation fund that would test, replicate, and scale up successful approaches to improving access to and completion in higher education, including partnerships among states, nonprofits, K-12 institutions, and institutions of higher education;
- Encourage institutions of higher education to create open educational resources;
- Authorize 5 pilot Pay for Success initiatives that would invest federal funds in proven solutions once they demonstrate results; and
- Authorize the U.S. Department of Education and Institute of Education Sciences to invest up to 1 percent of federal funds in evaluations to continuously improve their impact and results.

We believe that strategic investments in innovation, evidence-based practices, and evaluations have the potential to help many more students access and succeed in higher education.

Thank you for your continued efforts to ensure that federal taxpayer dollars are invested in what works in higher education.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Harris, KPPI Executive Director, Kellogg School of Management, Northwestern University
Brian Merritt, Vice President, Learning & Workforce Development, and Chief Academic Officer, Central Carolina Community College
Cecilia Muñoz, former Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council (Pres. Obama), and Vice President, New America
Bruce Reed, former Assistant to the President and Chief of Staff (V.P. Joe Biden), and former Director, White House Domestic Policy Council (Pres. Clinton)
Diane Schanzenbach, Director, Institute for Policy Research, Northwestern University
Doug Harris, Professor of Economics, Tulane University
Jennifer Wade-Berg, Associate Professor, Kennesaw State University
John Bridgeland, former Director of the White House Domestic Policy Council (Pres. G.W. Bush), and CEO, Civic, LLC
Joshua Ogburn, Director, University of Virginia Pay for Success Lab
Joshua Powers, Professor of Higher Education Leadership, Indiana State University
Kathryn Stack, former Deputy Associate Director and Senior Advisor, U.S. Office of Management and Budget
Kevin Madden, former Senior Advisor and Spokesman, Gov. Mitt Romney presidential campaign, and Partner, Hamilton Place Strategies
Lynn Cominsky, Professor and Chair, School of Education, Sonoma State University
Martin R. West, Professor of Education, Harvard Graduate School of Education
Matt Segneri, Director, Harvard Business School Social Enterprise Initiative
Paul Tchounwou, Associate Dean and Presidential Distinguished Professor, Jackson State University
Robert Shea, former Associate Director, White House Office of Management and Budget, and Principal, Public Sector, Grant Thornton, LLP
Timothy Renick, Senior Vice President for Student Success, Georgia State University