

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-1304**

February 16, 2024

The Honorable Dr. Miguel A. Cardona  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary Cardona,

We write to express our deep concerns about the rollout of the 2024-2025 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Specifically, we urge you to expeditiously resolve the current issue facing students whose parents do not have a Social Security Number (SSN). As a result of changes to the FAFSA application, tens of thousands of U.S. citizen students and others with legal status – who are eligible for financial aid regardless of their parents’ legal status – cannot submit their forms.

We appreciate that the Department of Education (ED) launched a redesigned FAFSA form under the *FAFSA Simplification Act*, which should ensure 610,000 more students from low-income backgrounds receive Federal Pell Grants. Pell recipients will now receive more aid with nearly 1.5 million more students receiving the maximum Pell Grant. However, we are concerned that the flawed rollout will prevent some applicants from submitting timely applications, especially the students who face the greatest barriers to access an education.

As you know, the redesigned form was delayed several months, leaving students with significantly less time than usual to complete their forms and apply to their desired schools. Once it eventually launched in December, many applicants struggled to access or submit the form. We understand that the Department of Education (ED) will now further delay sending students’ FAFSA data to schools while it fixes an issue with the Student Aid Index Calculation.

In particular, we wish to highlight that one of the most serious issues with the new form is that parents who do not have a SSN cannot enter their information. The redesigned form was intended to allow parents or spouses to create a Student Aid account and submit their application without a SSN; however, the new system is returning error messages that prevent students from submitting their applications. According to the [Federal Student Aid website](#), there has not been an update to this SSN issue since January 4, 2024.

**We urge the Department of Education to work expeditiously to resolve the technical issues with the new FSA ID system so that parents and students can successfully submit their completed applications.**

We also ask you to provide a timeline for resolving this issue; to work with schools and state governments to mitigate the problems; and to conduct outreach to proactively inform students, counselors, and other stakeholders about when families with undocumented parents can expect a solution and how to submit their forms once it's resolved.

Although some colleges have begun pushing back their decision deadlines, many colleges are still awarding financial aid on a first-come, first-served basis. As you know, several states including Alaska, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, Missouri, Nevada, North Carolina, North Dakota, Oklahoma, Oregon, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Vermont and Washington operate as first-come first-serve states. This aid dispersal method used by state schools means the faster a student submits their application, the better their chances of receiving larger award packages. It is imperative that FAFSA resolves these technical problems to ensure eligible students receive the financial aid they need to pursue a higher education.

Thank you for your attention to this urgent matter, and we look forward to your response no later than February 23, 2024.

Sincerely,



---

Jesús G. "Chuy" García  
Member of Congress



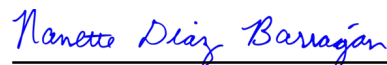
---

Jared Huffman  
Member of Congress



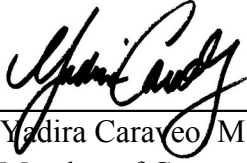
---

Colin Z. Allred  
Member of Congress



---

Nanette Diaz Barragán  
Member of Congress



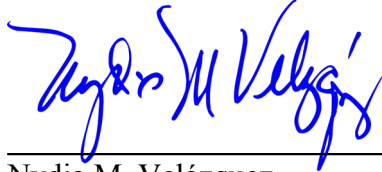
---

Yadira Caraveo M.D.  
Member of Congress



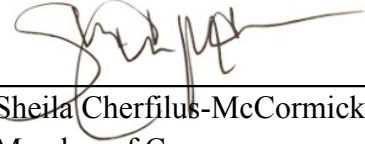
---

André Carson  
Member of Congress



---

Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



---

Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick  
Member of Congress



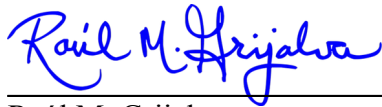
---

J. Luis Correa  
Member of Congress



---

Andrea Salinas  
Member of Congress



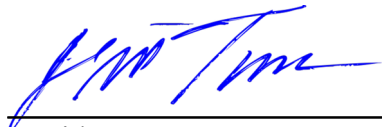
---

Raúl M. Grijalva  
Member of Congress



---

John Garamendi  
Member of Congress



---

David J. Trone  
Member of Congress



---

Kathy E. Manning  
Member of Congress



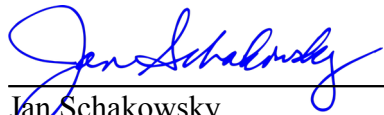
---

Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress  
Ranking Member,  
Subcommittee on Higher  
Education and Workforce  
Development



---

JM Tokuda  
Member of Congress



---

Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



---

Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



---

Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



---

Jamaal Bowman, Ed.D.  
Member of Congress



---

Rashida Tlaib  
Member of Congress



---

Katie Porter  
Member of Congress



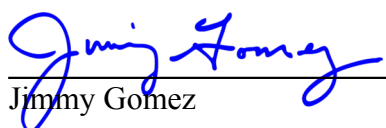
---

Adam B. Schiff  
Member of Congress



---

Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



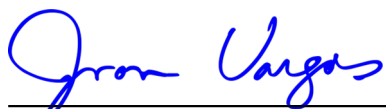
---

Jimmy Gomez  
Member of Congress



---

Joaquin Castro  
Member of Congress



---

Juan Vargas  
Member of Congress



---

Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



---

Adam Smith  
Member of Congress



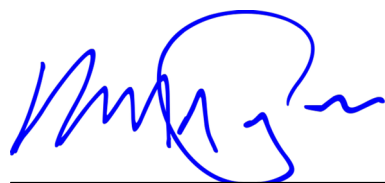
---

Dan Goldman  
Member of Congress



---

Andy Kim  
Member of Congress



---

Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



---

Lauren Underwood  
Member of Congress



---

Seth Magaziner  
Member of Congress



---

Eric Swalwell  
Member of Congress



---

James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



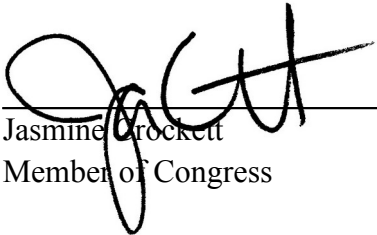
---

Ro Khanna  
Member of Congress



---

Raul Ruiz, M.D.  
Member of Congress



---

Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



---

Grace F. Napolitano  
Member of Congress



---

Jimmy Panetta  
Member of Congress



---

Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



---

MARK TAKANO  
Member of Congress



---

Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



---

Nikema Williams  
Member of Congress



---

Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



---

Grace Meng  
Member of Congress



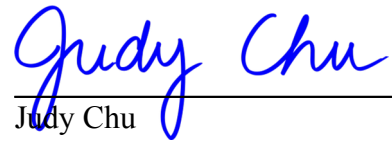
---

Frank Pallone, Jr.  
Member of Congress



---

Barbara Lee  
Member of Congress



---

Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



---

Kevin Mullin  
Member of Congress



---

Pete Aguilar  
Member of Congress



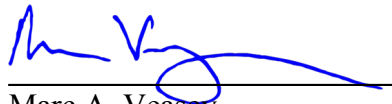
---

Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



---

Donald M. Payne, Jr.  
Member of Congress



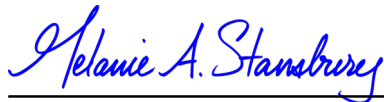
---

Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



---

Scott H. Peters  
Member of Congress



---

Melanie Stansbury  
Member of Congress



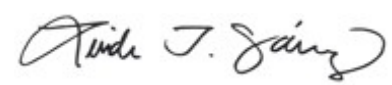
---

Maxwell Alejandro Frost  
Member of Congress



---

Earl Blumenauer  
Member of Congress



---

Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



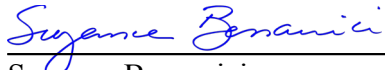
---

Zoe Lofgren  
Member of Congress



---

Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



---

Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



---

Stephen F. Lynch  
Member of Congress



---

Ilhan Omar  
Member of Congress



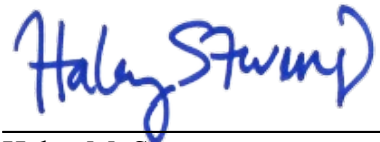
---

Lizzie Fletcher  
Member of Congress



---

Tony Cárdenas  
Member of Congress



---

Haley M. Stevens  
Member of Congress



---

Valerie P. Foushee  
Member of Congress



---

Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



---

Gabe Vasquez  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Stanton  
Member of Congress





---

Madeleine Dean  
Member of Congress



---

Bonnie Watson Coleman  
Member of Congress



---

Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



---

Mary Gay Scanlon  
Member of Congress



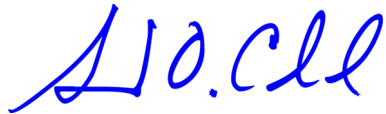
---

Julia Brownley  
Member of Congress



---

Darren Soto  
Member of Congress



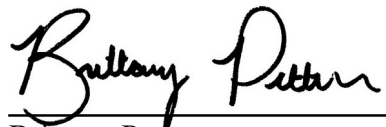
---

Salud Carbajal  
Member of Congress



---

Lori Trahan  
Member of Congress



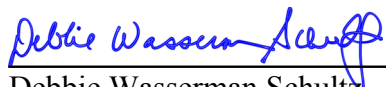
---

Brittany Pettersen  
Member of Congress



---

Joe Neguse  
Member of Congress



---

Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



---

Lloyd Doggett  
Member of Congress



---

Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



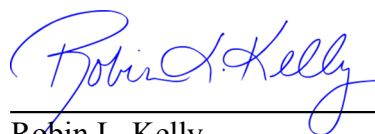
---

Teresa Leger Fernández  
Member of Congress



---

Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



---

Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress



---

Norma J. Torres  
Member of Congress



---

Chrissy Houlahan  
Member of Congress



---

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress



---

Sheila Jackson Lee  
Member of Congress