

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

April 8, 2025

The Honorable Secretary Dr. Linda McMahon  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Ave SW  
Washington, DC 20202

Dear Secretary McMahon,

We write to express serious concerns regarding the Administration's recent actions to dismantle the Department of Education. This decision raises significant concerns about the continuity and effectiveness of federally funded educational programs, particularly the Federal TRIO Programs (TRIO).

For more than half a century, TRIO has served as a cornerstone of the Department's efforts to remove barriers to education for students from disadvantaged backgrounds. Specifically, the eight TRIO programs help low-income, first-generation students, and students with disabilities successfully navigate the academic pipeline from middle school to postgraduate programs. Today, nearly 3,500 TRIO programs operate in all 50 states, Washington, D.C., the Pacific Islands, and Puerto Rico, serving nearly 900,000 students annually with the support of more than 1,000 colleges, universities, and community-based organizations.

TRIO participants consistently achieve higher rates of high school graduation, college enrollment, retention, and degree attainment compared to peers from similar backgrounds who do not receive TRIO services. Any disruption to these programs risks derailing the progress of students who already face significant barriers to academic success due to factors beyond their control.

The proposed dissolution of the Department, significant restructuring, and redistribution of core agency functions to other federal agencies undoubtedly creates considerable uncertainty about the future of TRIO. The lack of a centralized federal agency to coordinate efforts to fill gaps in state and local educational systems seriously risks exacerbating those gaps and existing disparities in students' access to education programs and services. The Administration's proposed changes raise important questions about the funding, administration, and support of TRIO moving forward.

To that end, we request detailed responses to the following questions by April 25, 2025, regarding the continuation, funding, and administration of TRIO programs across the country in light of the Administration's plans to close the Department.

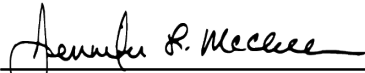
1. Will another federal agency assume the functions of administering and funding TRIO programs across the country, and if so, which one?
2. What specific measures is the Administration taking to ensure that TRIO programs and services remain uninterrupted during the Department's restructuring?
3. Will existing grantees retain their funding, and how will future grant competitions be managed during the transition?
4. Will the Administration affirm that it will not delay, withhold, or reprogram Congressionally appropriated TRIO funds, in accordance with its obligations under the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974?

5. With educational functions being transferred to other entities, how will the Administration ensure TRIO Programs maintain rigorous standards of accountability and effectiveness?
6. What frameworks will the Administration establish to monitor and evaluate program outcomes across potentially disparate administrative bodies?
7. Has the Department conducted assessments of the potential impacts of its closure on TRIO Programs, grantee institutions, and student beneficiaries?

We strongly oppose any efforts to restructure, redistribute, or dismantle the Department of Education. TRIO represents one of the many vital investments in our nation's commitment to educational access and equity. Without an Act of Congress, any further attempts to abolish this federal agency or any of its programs—endangering the academic success of millions of students—would constitute a clear overreach of executive authority and a breach of trust with the communities these programs are designed to serve.

We urge the Administration to halt any unilateral actions that could disrupt the delivery of critical educational services like TRIO and instead work in partnership with Congress to strengthen, not weaken, the infrastructure that supports student success.

Sincerely,



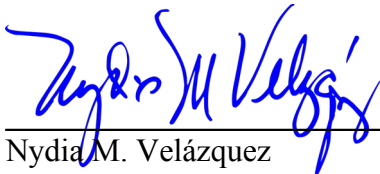
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Jennifer L. McClellan  
Member of Congress



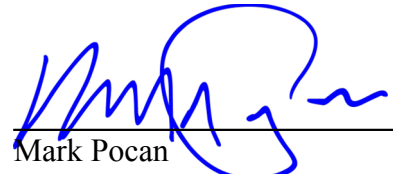
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Gwen S. Moore  
Member of Congress



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Nydia M. Velázquez  
Member of Congress



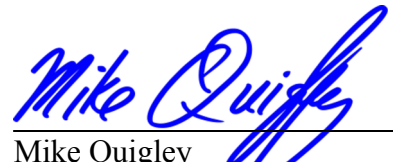
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Mark Pocan  
Member of Congress



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Delia C. Ramirez  
Member of Congress



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Mike Quigley  
Member of Congress



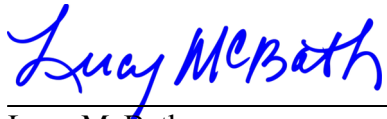
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Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.  
Member of Congress



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Wesley Bell  
Member of Congress



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Lucy McBath  
Member of Congress



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Diana DeGette  
Member of Congress



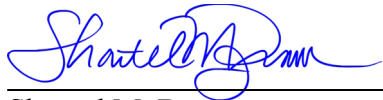
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Steve Cohen  
Member of Congress



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Eleanor Holmes Norton  
Member of Congress



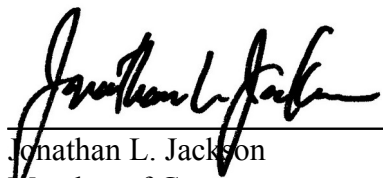
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Shontel M. Brown  
Member of Congress



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Frederica S. Wilson  
Member of Congress



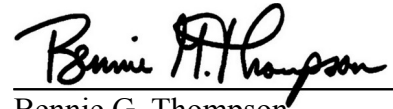
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Jonathan L. Jackson  
Member of Congress



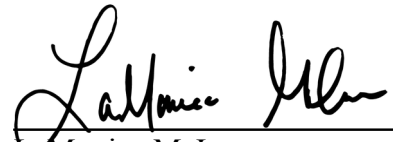
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Paul D. Tonko  
Member of Congress



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Bennie G. Thompson  
Member of Congress



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LaMonica McIver  
Member of Congress



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Terri A. Sewell  
Member of Congress



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Linda T. Sánchez  
Member of Congress



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Robin L. Kelly  
Member of Congress

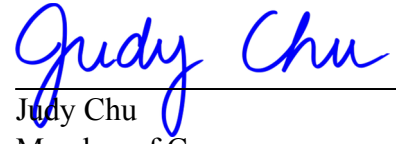


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Troy A. Carter, Sr.  
Member of Congress



Sarah McBride  
Member of Congress



Judy Chu  
Member of Congress



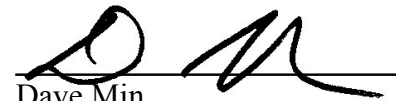
Danny K. Davis  
Member of Congress



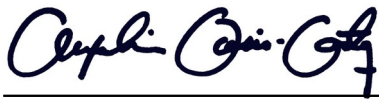
Jim Tokuda  
Member of Congress



Josh Riley  
Member of Congress



Dave Min  
Member of Congress



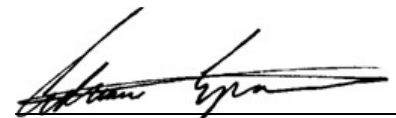
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez  
Member of Congress



Dina Titus  
Member of Congress



James P. McGovern  
Member of Congress



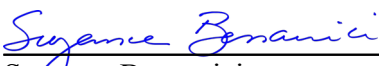
Adriano Espaillat  
Member of Congress



Josh Harder  
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson  
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici  
Member of Congress



Ritchie Torres  
Member of Congress



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Dwight Evans  
Member of Congress



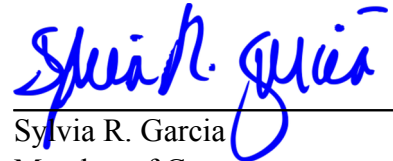
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Jan Schakowsky  
Member of Congress



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Ami Bera, M.D.  
Member of Congress



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Sylvia R. Garcia  
Member of Congress



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George Whitesides  
Member of Congress



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Greg Landsman  
Member of Congress



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Robert Garcia  
Member of Congress



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Betty McCollum  
Member of Congress



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Pramila Jayapal  
Member of Congress



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Shri Thanedar  
Member of Congress



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Greg Casar  
Member of Congress



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Val Hoyle  
Member of Congress



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Marc A. Veasey  
Member of Congress



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Jasmine Crockett  
Member of Congress



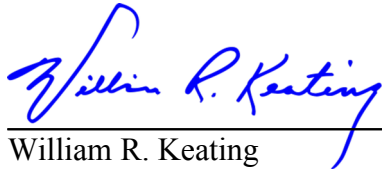
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Seth Moulton  
Member of Congress



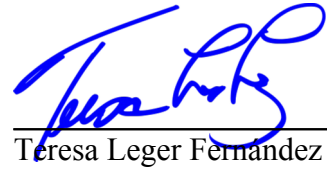
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Eric Sorensen  
Member of Congress



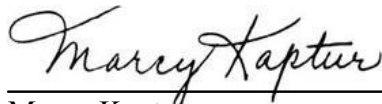
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William R. Keating  
Member of Congress



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Teresa Leger Fernandez  
Member of Congress



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Marcy Kaptur  
Member of Congress



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Derek T. Tran  
Member of Congress



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Chellie Pingree  
Member of Congress



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Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



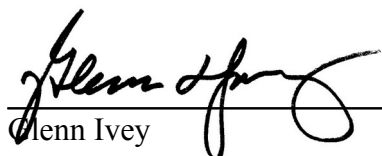
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Joyce Beatty  
Member of Congress



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Summer L. Lee  
Member of Congress



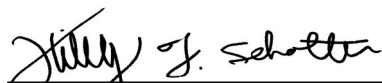
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Glenn Ivey  
Member of Congress



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Ed Case  
Member of Congress



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Hillary J. Scholten  
Member of Congress