

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 1, 1976

The Speaker of the
House of Representatives

Sir:

I ask the Congress to consider an amendment to the request for appropriations transmitted in House Document No. 94-375 for the fiscal year 1976 in the amount of \$224,000,000 for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

The amendment, as explained in the enclosed letter from the Director of the Office of Management and Budget, is required by an unexpected increase in the number of students participating in the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program.

The Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program has grown in popularity and is now on the verge of becoming the cornerstone of Federal higher education student assistance. In the current 1975-1976 academic year, over \$1 billion has been committed to fully fund the program for three classes of students.

As you know, my Administration has consistently supported a fully funded Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program. This reflects the belief that the best way to allocate higher education dollars is to concentrate on financial aid to students on the basis of need. In my 1976 budget request to the Congress, I proposed a funding level of \$1,050 million for basic grants for academic year 1976-1977. I also proposed the elimination or reduction of programs that did not promote the principle of equitable direct student assistance. The Congress, however, decided not to follow that proposal, and over my veto appropriated only \$715 million for basic grants and added \$768 million to programs which did not promote this principle. I again attempted to

restore a full funding policy for fiscal year 1976 by agreeing to transmit a supplemental appropriation request for basic grants if the Congress would rescind the \$768 million for the lower priority higher education programs. The Congress rejected the rescission proposal.

In the absence of favorable action by the Congress on my recommendations, the awards in this program will have to be reduced by as much as 50 percent for as many as one million students. This will be the direct result of congressional failure to adopt my proposals.

However, Congress still has an opportunity to achieve full funding, prevent students from receiving smaller grants, and not increase the budget. The Department of Health, Education, and Welfare is requesting authority to reprogram \$175 million for use in this program. There is also available an additional \$351 million, which Congress enacted over my request for other programs and did not rescind. Congress still has the opportunity to enact legislation to transfer \$213 million of these funds to the Basic Educational Opportunity Grant program. These actions, coupled with enactment of the supplemental appropriations I am requesting today, will provide full funding for the basic grants program. I urge the Congress to take these steps in order to provide the students the funds required to help them obtain a higher education.

Respectfully,

Herald R. Ford



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

March 30, 1976

The President

The White House

Sir:

I have the honor to submit for your consideration an amendment to supplemental appropriations requested in House Document No. 94-375 for fiscal year 1976 involving an increase in the amount of \$224,000,000 for the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

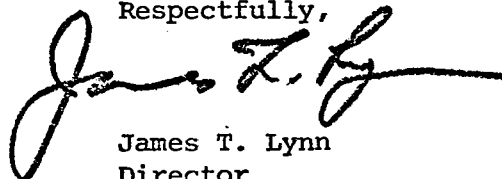
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

Heading	1976 supplemental request pending House Doc. 94-375	1976 proposed amendment	1976 revised request
Higher education	\$180,200,000	\$224,000,000	\$404,200,000

This request is necessary to meet the increased participation being experienced in the Basic Opportunity Grant program while maintaining the award amounts contemplated by the Congress when it passed the 1976 appropriation for this program.

I have carefully reviewed this amendment and am satisfied that this request is necessary at this time. I recommend, therefore, that this proposal be transmitted to the Congress.

Respectfully,



James T. Lynn
Director