MEMORANDUM

TO: ASAHP
FROM: Kristen Truong
DATE: June 14, 2023
RE: House Education and the Workforce Committee, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development Hearing on “Postsecondary Innovation: Preparing Today’s Students for Tomorrow’s Opportunities”

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[HEARING LINK]

Overview:
The House Education and the Workforce Committee’s Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development held a hearing on “Postsecondary Innovation: Preparing Today’s Students for Tomorrow’s Opportunities” with the overarching theme of getting students on the pathway to a high quality, high paying job.

The hearing focused on challenging the traditional models of four year colleges and universities with alternative paths, such as CTE, dual enrollment, and community colleges, that result in students graduating with a degree or credential. Members raised concerns about transparency in postsecondary tuition and the student debt from four year institutions. Students need to understand the potential financial impact of their postsecondary education programs to reduce their dropout rates. Members asked the witnesses about introducing career and technical education pathways to students earlier in high and middle school and whether CTE programs have considered the use of online learning to broaden their reach.

A hearing recap from the Committee’s majority staff is available here. A more detailed summary of the Q&A in available below.

Opening Statements:
Subcommittee Committee Chair Burgess Owens (R-UT-04) [Full Statement]
Subcommittee Ranking Member Frederica Wilson (D-FL-24) [Full Statement]

Witness Testimony
Dr. Tim Renick, Executive Director, National Institute for Student Success, Georgia State University [Full Statement]
Mr. Keith Shoates, Chief Operating Officer, Student Freedom Initiative (SFI) [Full Statement]
Ms. Lanae Erickson, Senior Vice President for Social Policy, Education and Politics, Third Way [Full Statement]
Dr. Lori Carrell, Chancellor, University of Minnesota Rochester and Co-Director, College-in-3 Initiative [Full Statement]

Q&A Summary
Subcommittee Committee Chair Burgess Owens (R-UT-04)
• College-in-3 and work in degree programs
• Partnerships as new technology is developed

Full Committee Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D-VA-03)
• Guardrails for short term Pell

Full Committee Chair Virginia Foxx (R-NC-05)
• Strategies at community colleges or short term providers for students earn a credential

Subcommittee Ranking Member Frederica Wilson (D-FL-24)
• Teacher shortage and barriers for dual enrollment

Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-WI-06)
• Ways to reduce college drop out
• 2 years at home then 2 years in college compared to 4 years

Rep. Mark Takano (D-CA-39)
• Protect underserved populations from low quality educational systems
• What makes a quality CBE program?

Rep. Lucy McBath (D-GA-07)
• Minority pathways to high quality, good paying jobs

Rep. Bob Good (R-VA-05)
• Micro grants for students to graduate on time

Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC-12)
• Financial support for dual enrollment programs
• Partnership of four year institutions with community colleges

Rep. Erin Houchin (R-IN-09)
• Transparency in tuition and fees to decrease student debt

Rep. Kathy Manning (D-NC-06)
• Evidence based practices for wraparound student support
• Share CTE pathways with students earlier on

Rep. G.T. Thomson (R-PA-15)
• Online learning for CTE

Q&A
Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)

Thank you again for witnesses being here. I will now begin with this question our witness on the five minute rule. I will begin this process.

Mr. Shoates innovative financing is often the lane of innovation that is overlooked. But I like to highlight that here today. The student freedom initiative has launched an alternative to the Parent PLUS loan. This income contingent private loan is offered because of SFI understanding that encouraging individuals and families to borrow well above their ability to repay him amounts to a predatory debt trap.

In your testimony you stated and I quote, black students have two times the average debt hold twice debt twice as long and are five times more likely to default after graduation compared to their white counterparts and quote, unfortunately, a Parent Plus loans have become a debt trap to many families. Can you tell us more about your SFI as an alternative to the Parent PLUS loan and why alternative private financing is good option for the last dollar financing?

Keith Shoates

Yes, thank you for your question Chairman. The student freedom initiative initiated the what we call the alternative to Parent Plus loans. Again, it's for juniors and seniors. So it's very narrowly defined juniors and seniors is not for all majors.
So it's for science, technology, engineering and math because as we're doing our research, that's where the jobs were and that's what industry required. So we focused on juniors and seniors majoring in STEM, we recognize that we wanted to provide an alternative another option that can be made available after the other alternatives that were available to some students were exhausted. Because we recognize this one, there's no one size fits all. And so we wanted to make certain that there was an alternative to almost traditionally made available for students who had this type of need.

So it's used after the other source of financial aid have been exhausted and they're still in need. The benefit is provided it's $20,000 per year for each student. Their repayment terms are pretty flexible in terms of when they start paying, there's an income below which there is no payment. But more importantly, what we've done is we've raised a large amount of private capital to actually fund it, because as we were doing our research, we realized that existing HBCUs and some minority serving institutions couldn't use their endowment to fund something like this.

So we went to the private sector to actually provide the funding. And the way that the model works is as students are paying back into the fund, it's actually paying for benefit of future students. So as a nonprofit, the money doesn't come in for a profit motive or anything like that. It actually is funneled back in through the means by which to actually make the profit make the funds available for future students.

So so that's basically the basic model. We've got some 56 institutions that are participating in the program in schools from Florida to Georgia to almost every state we've got about 23 states that have schools that participate in the program, but that's the basic model. And again, it's really intended to replace the Parent PLUS loan. It's intended to provide an alternative.

It's focused on juniors and seniors and those who are majoring in science, technology, engineering and math.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you. Thank you, Miss Jones. Appreciate that. Dr. Carroll, you mentioned in your testimony, the college and three experiment has 12 participating institutions, what does it take to get those 12 together and through their your conversations how to each route to a conclusion that they work in degree programs is a necessary step but as an institution to better serve their students?

**Lanae Erickson**

We use professional and personal networks to begin conversations with presidents and Provost across the country. And we currently have more campuses interested in being pilots than we can manage so we selected 12 for their diversity from one another to have public and private together. The President and Provost work to gather collaborative, creative faculty designed teams and hosted broad Campus Conversations to explore the purpose and value of college and particularly what a college graduate should know and be able to do in the 21st century right at graduation. And those conversations propelled the project forward as faculty design teams became invigorated.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you, and a few seconds we have left Dr. Renick. You mentioned the contracts with data companies like mainstays stepping blocks are vital, quote, allowing to make quick gains and technical capabilities that would have been impossible to on efforts alone. Can you kind of elaborate a little bit on that in the time we have left?

**Timothy Renick**

Absolutely, absolutely. The reality is that the technical expertise needed to run some of these cutting edge programs with predictive analytics CRMs AI and so forth. are not easily accessible at the post secondary level. What Georgia State has done very aggressively is partner with new startups as they're beginning to develop these technologies.
The benefits are twofold. One, we can often get these products and systems for less costs, but more importantly we can be part of the design. Because while the tech field has great expertise in the technology, they often don’t understand the lifecycle of the students and the reality of day to day challenges that they're facing. So these are true tech partnerships with public institutions like Georgia State.

Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)

Thank you so much. I now like to recognize Ranking Member for the purposes of questioning the witnesses.

Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)

Thank you, Mr. Chair. Mr. Shoates, I'm a lifelong educator and a champion for young black boys to interrupt the school to prison pipeline. It is my understanding that your initiative freedom student freedom initiative came about as a result of the 2019 pay off of Morehouse College by Robert Smith, but they didn't have to pay him back. And then during my time, make sure that 100 boys go to college debt free and they don't own any debt when they finish just through our influence and raising money.

So tell me this, what services do you provide to Florida's HBCUs?

Keith Shoates

Currently, we have within our program amongst those that I didn't identify previously, Florida A&M is one of the programs it’s in the sponsored program. All those organizations or institutions who choose to be can be a member of the of student freedom initiative, so it’s no impediment so all of the schools in fact, in fact, we’d really like to have Georgia State next to us because of the number of minority students that they graduate but also, almost all HBCUs and minority serving institutions in the state of Florida are eligible.

Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)

Thank you. Miss Erickson, many dual enrollment programs, particularly those that use high school instructors, certified as adjunct faculty are finding it difficult to locate qualified instructors. What strategies can Congress support to address teacher shortages that inhibited greatest access to dual enrollment?

Lanae Erickson

Thank you for the question. I for a long time worked on initiative at third way to modernize the teaching profession to make it a place where our highest quality students want to continue their career. I think we all know that pay is a component of that. But also respect is a component of that and treating teachers as the professionals that they are elevating the teaching profession to show that it is a place where if you are a high achiever, you might want to go into that role.

And then of course raising the wages so that across the lifecycle of a teacher, they can remain in that profession rather than having to leave when they may become a breadwinner. To support a family. I think we need to do all of those things to support our teachers across the country and particularly post pandemic, where we've seen teachers take on so much more stress in so many more roles. The last point I would say is to really fund support staff at schools so that teachers can do the job of teaching and not have to do all of the other jobs that we require of them in so many places right now.

So I would say fully fund, Title One increased title one funding and really invest in modernizing our teaching profession to make it the high quality respected profession that it can and should be.

Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)
Thank you. How do you think policymakers can create a system that fosters equitable education access to dual enrollment? And what are the biggest challenges that an institution ensues?

**Lanae Erickson**

I think one of the biggest challenges for equity and dual enrollment programs is inequity in our K 12 system. If you have a school that is poorly funded, that doesn't have the resources to establish a dual enrollment program with local higher education program, then those students are not going to have access to an innovation that we know can really improve their students success. So dual enrollment programs are phenomenal. And they're mostly available to students right now who we know would succeed anyways. So I think we really need to focus on our Title One schools, investing in the places that the students really need that leg up for economic mobility, and then getting him into the research tested programs like we have here that show a pathway to student success that are evidence based.

That are not built on a hypothesis but are built on real evidence and research of showing students success.

**Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)**

Okay. How does chronic underfunding impact the ability of institutions like HBCUs to engage in scaling up innovative practices, these innovative practices that we're talking about today?

**Lanae Erickson**

It's a huge problem in our K 12 system, we realized that we needed title one to help to overcome those inequities. And in our higher education system, we basically have a voucher system, where Harvard gets the same Pell Grant that an HBCU would get and that's where we really need to focus the investment of things like Title Three, Title Five, but also potentially create more avenues to invest in the institutions that are really doing the hard work of providing mobility to our students.

**Rep. Frederica Wilson (D-Fla.)**

Mr. Chair, I'd just like to request unanimous consent to enter into the record six recommendations for making dual enrollment programs more equitable from the Education Trust. Thank you. Thank you, Miss Erickson.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you. A quick word. My dad was worked for four years at Florida A&M. So I grew up in the shadows and I'm excited to hear its innovation is coming to light areas.

Thank you so much for that. Like now, I have Mr. Grothman.

**Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)**

I'm gonna go a little different direction here. In my state days as state legislator we learned that students who begin at a local college, slip of their parents for two or three years and then switch to a four year college, and they haven't both in Wisconsin do better than kids who leave to go away right away. My guess is it has something to do with the lifestyle of 18 year olds who are living apart from their parents for the first time. Are we doing a good job out there in getting kids to, you know, I assume most places like Wisconsin, have universities that are near where someone went to high school and we have 26 public universities in Wisconsin, maybe they'd say, are we doing a good job?

Could you comment on that both as a way to save money and to lessen the chances that you're going to be a drop out? We'll take Mr. Shoates.
Keith Shoates

Yes. So thanks for your question. One of the things that we did as we're working through the development of the program is we did a a driving tour Dr. Mark Brown and I of South Carolina, one of those institution we attended was Benedict there in South Carolina, and they actually have most of the students who attend are right there within their neighborhood. And one of the examples that she actually gave was during the pandemic, there was a student who came from fragile economic background.

He kept coming to our office saying we have schools that are open and what we found out is that students came from a fragile economic background just as you indicated, they were actually living in their car and doing their homework at Chick fil A. And so they went to the local school. Because that was the place where they could actually be in an environment that was comfortable to them, and they could actually excel and that person later graduated with an engineering degree and so forth.

Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)

I guess the point I'm trying to make as soon as we over focus on kids with, you know, economically disadvantaged and forget about the middle class kid. I think what I learned in Wisconsin is even for an average kid who's staying at home for two years, you will both do better academically. If you go to a college within driving distance, and you will also save money so less of a chance that you wind up in debt. Is that something anybody is recommending or do you believe I am right in both of those?

Lori Carrell

We find that the key variable for students succeeding is sense of belonging. And so in what you've described, that sense of belonging is coming from family and neighbors. Okay.

Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)

Does anybody even keep track of this stuff? I'll put it that way. Okay. We happen to keep track of it in Wisconsin, because we have these two universities.

We have people representing the kind of the establish the educational establishment here, I believe, based on experiences in Wisconsin, that kids in general would do better staying at home for the first two years because there are less to adapt a party lifestyle. So they do better academically and they would save money. Are there studies confirming that or do we not even do studies on that topic?

Keith Shoates

Sir, if I could jump in, you know, there are studies and they show a wide variance depending on how well the systems interact with each other.

So in Wisconsin, you might have a fantastic system that interacts well between the community colleges and a four year program.

Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)

Well, they shouldn't be transferred. But do we do a study with systems that do link up? I mean, I think there is a lot of systems I can rattle off in my head all the public universities in Illinois, do we do a study in which we can tell a kid or tell a kid and his parents that you wouldn't be better off? You might not have as much fun, but you'd be better off spending the first two years at the local college.

Timothy Renick

I can comment that the financial benefit in the state of Georgia is about a 40% reduction.
**Rep. Glenn Grothman (R-Wis.)**

And I'm getting your My the clock running out here. But what I'm going to ask you when you compare two groups of kids say in Wisconsin both going the first two years to UW Sheboygan or something and going the last two years to UW Green Bay. Do the kids who start with two years at home do better or worse in their third or fourth year than the kids who went away from school immediately?

**Timothy Renick**

What we've done with Georgia State and we have looked at these data very carefully is get to the point where the students who make this transfer from community college to Georgia state compared to those who start at Georgia State are graduating at the same rates and that's a good accomplishment that they're equal in accomplishment, even though the cost for the students who start at the community college is about 40% Less.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you. Mr. Takano.

**Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.)**

Yes, thank you, Mr. Grossman. That discussion was very interesting to me. As a former commuter college trustee, I've noticed that many of our commuter college transfers into the UCS actually do better. So it's many cases they do just as well.

I think there's a bipartisan interest in dual enrollment programs, both in terms of folks that can finish high school with two years of community college under their belt and go, you know, matriculate straight into a four year university. Maybe those students want to actually do those four years. In addition, or maybe get a head start on a master's degree. So I recommend that we actually kind of look at as a Committee, do some site visits to early college high schools.

Look at Dr. Bob Stevens. Work at Bard College and the Bard College experiments in lower Manhattan. I think we could see not only from the savings point of view, but from the effectiveness of challenging young people much earlier and high school. So I think this is a good bipartisan topic for us.

And we've heard today about the types of students that competency based education provider providers are serving. We've heard a lot about working adult students first generation students and students of color. As you know, these students are so often aggressively recruited by low quality for profit institutions that charge too much for a degree not worth the paper it's printed on. Given the rapid growth of a competency based education programs and providers.

It seems clear that some companies see this as a business opportunity. Now are there ways that Congress, we can make sure that we do not allow students who have been historically underserved by our educational systems to be taken advantage of and our desire to adopt new models and approaches? This question is for Ms. Erickson.

**Lanae Erickson**

Absolutely, thank you, Mr. Takano.

And this Committee is really lovely because you have former educators on it. It's nice to nice to hear that conversation. So I think that this is exactly the right question. And it is where our desire for innovation and an experimentation really needs to come together with guardrails.
So I think you know that already we have within the Higher Education Act, the experimental sites authority, which Dr. Carroll mentioned as well, where we can actually pilot things we can say something that's required under current law or regulations. Maybe it's holding folks back, let's test it and see if that's true or not. And then let's see how the students do and I think, importantly, we need to see how disaggregated groups of students do in those programs, because it might be the case that some students who perform very well, so coding camp that's recruiting Harvard undergrads looks pretty good because they're Harvard. Graduates, that they're recruiting into those programs, but might actually perform incredibly poorly for another group of students.

And I think that is really why we need to also pass the college Transparency Act so that we can really have that access to the data to see which students are you serving well with this program and are you in fact seeing folks trying to innovate in order to just make more money off of students or are they really invested in student success.

**Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.)**

Thank you for that. Well, Congress needs to be responsible and cautious about authorizing competency based education and statute. And while there are benefits of high quality innovations, there are also risks to both students and taxpayers and any new model of higher education that isn't focused on outcomes, such as Erickson, can you tell us more about what makes a quality CBE program and what kinds of things we should be looking for to ensure that programs put students first?

**Lanae Erickson**

Absolutely, you know, I think the upside of the CBE opportunity is that it can provide relevancy and flexibility so that we're meeting our workforce needs as they change and also allowing people to not have to sit their butts in a seat for a certain amount of hours but really be able to show that they can do the work that they know that material and can move on.

But I think we also need to make sure that those students are getting a high quality education. And one of the things we learned during COVID is that online programs have real limitations. They have opportunities, but they have limitations. And as a person who was living in a House with, you know, an eighth grader and a fifth grader going to school online, there were some real limitations there when our schools were closed for a long time in Virginia.

And so I think we need to make sure that particularly with those online programs, we are encouraging regular and substantive interaction with educators who are accredited and trained to do that interaction so that essentially taxpayers aren't just funding a very expensive YouTube video.

**Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.)**

Well, thank you so much, Miss Erickson. Mr. Chairman, this is a very interesting hearing to me. I'm sorry that my time is up and I yield back. I there's so many more questions.

I have for the witnesses are so great, great lineup.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you. And, and I have to agree, I love this bipartisan process and get this thing done. Okay, I'd like to recognize Mr. Banks.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

Dr. Rennick, does Georgia State offer any AI related degrees?

**Timothy Renick**
We offer a number of degrees in analytics and predictive use of data but not AI degrees currently.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

Are there plans to or discussions at the university or our discussions of academic degrees might be useful to students as we prepare for what we know will be very disruptive moment and the American labor market with artificial intelligence and what that will do to our economy? Can you just elaborate more on what those discussions are? Are like at the university level of what those degrees might lead to?

**Timothy Renick**

Yeah, sure. They're not only discussions active discussions of degrees in AI, but also discussion about degrees in the ethics of AI and some of the social and political implications of it as well. And these sorts of programs are being developed not just at Georgia state but across a number of other institutions. And nationally, I think it's important to distinguish different uses of AI as we apply it in higher education.

And just to be clear, when I talk about Georgia State using AI as we are on a day to day basis, this is not generative AI it's not Chat GPT that is generating novel content. By the AI itself, we're using AI in order to help us direct appropriate information to our students from vetted a knowledge base. So what AI does is when student asks a question via text, it goes into the knowledge base and pulls out the appropriate answer rather than generating an answer in and of itself.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

Understood, but you do envision that in a short period of time, there will be specific degree programs at universities like yours directly related to artificial intelligence. Use it how to implement it in the labor market to new new jobs that are going to win from the jobs will be eliminated. Absolutely.

**Timothy Renick**

Fully expect that.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

I'm glad you brought up Chat GPT a recent survey found that 43% of college students say that they've used AI tools like chat GPT and half of those who admit to using it to complete assignments or exams. So that's nearly one in five college students who admit to using AI to complete their coursework. are there instances at Georgia State where a student was caught unethically using AI and on a major assignment or exam Vicki talked about some of the ethics related to that and how you how you've dealt with situations like those.

**Timothy Renick**

And I'm not directly involved in the teaching component any longer at Georgia State. I'm now the Director of the National Institute for student success. So chat GPT is a relatively new phenomenon. What our strategy will be going forward is to make sure that we are using the tools in a way that can support the student's educational development.

I mean, we we faced this issue decades ago with with you know, the emergence of calculators and other things in math courses. We're going to have to find ways in which we can generate assignments that are high level and that allow the students to show what the work that they actually can do.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**
Can you be more specific? I mean, what are our schools talking about eliminating the opportunities for cheating, and assignments or exams using chat GPT. How do we stop that?

**Timothy Renick**

Yeah, I don't know that there's a blanket way to stop cheating in with chat GPT or any other sort of mechanism. There are discussions going on, but recognize chat. GPT has a very new phenomenon. We're talking about the last six months.

So thinking that we have now figured out and develop policies to deal with it.

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

Terrible. Any any thoughts on that?

**Lori Carrell**

We will need to adapt there are you know, relatively new in this last semester developments related to chat GPT and we've we've seen some early studies showing that it is possible to discern the difference and some others that are saying it is not possible to discern the difference. So we need to adapt, and certainly it's important that we do not allow for cheating. At the same time, AI holds promise for helping us track data at scale and to help more students succeed. So is it diabolical or is it divine?

**Rep. Jim Banks (R-Ind.)**

Think I agree but I doesn't seem like there's a specific resolution or any recommendations that you have on that note, maybe if you think about some you can let us know later. Thank you. With that I yield back.

**Rep. Burgess Owens (R-Utah)**

Thank you, like recognized Miss McBath from Georgia.

**Rep. Lucy McBath (D-Ga.)**

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and thank you to our panel of witnesses for being here today and making this hearing possible. I have read your testimonies, and ensuring our higher education and workforce systems operate hand in hand is incredibly important and we must do more to make sure that our students are being encouraged to take advantage of all opportunities that are afforded them. This only helps to better themselves but also their finances and their families and economically, the future of our communities but also ensure that our people have the skills necessary to fill these in demand sectors of the economy and help the American communities compete.

While there are other viable ways to get fair like a registered apprenticeship, a college degree or credential is still the best and most successful pathway to economic security. And we're seeing that play out in real time in Georgia at Georgia State. I do represent Georgia and thank you so much for being here today, where they have been ranked among the top institutions in the nation for helping students to lift themselves not just out of poverty, but also into the upper half of the earners. Economically in the country.

Almost 60% of Georgia State students are Pell eligible, and almost 80% of them are non white, and they work while they're actually going to school. That's admirable. The education system is supposed to serve as a ladder for economic mobility. And GSU has learned in this mission to do that very thing.

And there. We've seen incredibly promising results out of Georgia State University. They've increased our graduation rate by 70% Just since 2010. Using this institutional aid program known as the Panther retention grants, they go out of their way to identify students who are at risk of dropping out because of the cost of the
education and award them small grants to ensure that they stay enrolled and that they actually complete graduation.

And I'm also glad to have them in my home state and here on the Hill today to show the rest of the country their important work. Dr. Renick I have two questions for you today. At the beginning of the pandemic, the University System of Georgia sustained a 10% cut of roughly $230 million that was never ever restored. The state recently went even further and had additional cuts of $600 million from next year's budget which translates to about $8 million cut for Georgia's largest university system, Georgia State.

In your testimony, you mentioned that regional public universities are oftentimes stripped of the resources with large classes and overwhelmed staff. Do cuts like these make it more difficult for you to accomplish your mission and to get the positive results that we've seen at GSU. We want to continue to see those results. And is this more difficult because of these kinds of cuts.

Timothy Renick

Thank you Representative. The budget challenges in Georgia and other states that the Institute I direct are working with our day to day challenge. It's shifting sands from one month to the next one doesn't know what the budget will be. But typically they've been going down as far as state appropriations are concerned.

What we're doing is working at Georgia State to make sure that we prioritize the interventions we know by evidence to make the big difference. And we're happy to say that while students are struggling as they arrive at Georgia State in numbers higher than was the case prior to the pandemic that we continue to set records for graduation rates even into the pandemic because these kinds of systematic supports work. One thing I'm messaging to the presidents and the leadership of other institutions we're working with at the Institute, we have about 40 schools we're working with right now is when you're facing budget cuts where those budget cuts could best be made and the knee jerk reaction oftentimes is to cut the support staff, the advisors, the counselors, the the financial aid, staff, and so forth, which in many ways is shoot yourself in the foot because these are the very people on campus who will help generate the tuition and the revenues that will sustain these institutions.

Rep. Lucy McBath (D-Ga.)

Thank you. And I have one more question for you. Georgia State provides four year degrees to predominantly black and minority students more than any other institution in the nation. In your testimony. You also mentioned efforts that you've taken to make this happen. Can you expound upon that just a little bit more for us, but all the work that you're doing at Georgia State to ensure that students have access to strong education and that they graduate on time and get connected to high quality, good paying jobs?

Timothy Renick

You know, the reality is that over the last decade, Georgia State has conferred more bachelor's degrees to black students than any other college or university in the United States. So these approaches work, they work across the demographic spectrum. Since we're short on time, what I'll say is the key part of our strategy is to take what used to be optional supports where students would have to take time out of their day to seek help to find an office to connect with support and hardwire that into the student experience. So every student who attends Georgia State will get exposed to career capabilities into counseling will get access to tutoring and so forth will get these micro grants if they run into problems and are at risk of dropping out.

For financial reasons. These are just systematically delivered to all students. And when we did so, and we've run randomized control trials that confirm this, although the supports are available to all students equally, it's oftentimes the students from underserved backgrounds who benefit the most from that systematic approach including our black students.
Rep. Lucy McBath (D-Ga.)

Thank you, man for time and Go Panthers.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Mr. Good, you’re recognized for five minutes.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

Thank you, Madam Chairman. Thank you to our witnesses for being here. And I have been in your stadium Dr. Renick. And so my first question is unrelated to that visit but for you.

In your testimony, you mentioned that Georgia State made use of small dollar grants funded by alumni and private donors. How could this model be used more broadly by schools to reduce costs for students?

Timothy Renick

Yeah, it's a great question. And we just finished a longitudinal study of over 70,000 students, we looked at them from 2013 to 2021, and one result was particularly sobering. If a student stops out of college for even a single semester for financial reasons. Their chances of graduating go down by about 50 percentage points, the difference between graduating at 75% rate to a 25% rate.

So this Panther retention grant program, which we initiated a decade ago, is designed to use data to identify oftentimes before the student him or herself realizes they're going to be on a pathway to dropping out for financial reasons. provide them the counseling and then small micro grants, the micro grants only average $900 each, but we've given over 19,000 of these grants out and every year now about 1300 of the students who walk across the stage at that stadium that you've had the chance of visiting, are recipients of these the these micro grants, what it indicates is we need to be a lot more flexible and data oriented in the way we award aid, if we were trying to, you know support every Georgia State student for four years fully with institutional aid, we'd be overwhelmed but by looking at students who are close to graduating, looking at the data to see where the small grant will make the big difference. We've been able to get over 80% of the recipients of these micro grants to graduate from Georgia State.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

That's incredible results there. So you mentioned the 70,000 number.

Timothy Renick

These are 70,000 students across eight years of enrollment at Georgia State.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

Approximately what percentage are number students? Do you think or would you would you say you have been totally impacted by this? I guess you gave a number but what percentage of the total is that that's been able to be helped by these programs?

Timothy Renick

And this was part of the longitudinal study of those 70,000 students. If a student received the grant, then they graduated from Georgia State at about a 75% clip. So we're talking about over the course of the life of this program. Well over 10,000 students that have graduated, who otherwise would have been stopped out and unlikely to return to complete their degrees.
Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

So would it be one out of approximately seven then 10,000 of the 70,000 that you looked at?

Timothy Renick

80% of the students who get the grants are graduating on times, and we've given out 19,000 of these grants total.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

You think more colleges aren't using this approach today not know about it is the resistance. What do you think the reason would be we don't see and hear about this and other schools more commonly.

Timothy Renick

I think there are a couple challenges. One is that we do need to do a better job of sharing best practices. That's one of the reasons that we founded this National Institute for student success where we work with campuses to implement these changes, but it does require good data. It requires you to be able to understand which students are at financial risk which students are at risk of falling out of compliance with SAP which ones are running out of eligibility for state or federal grants and so forth, and to be on top of it because once the student leaves our institution, the inertia is very hard to reverse.

It's hard to bring the student back once they stop out.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

That was my experience as a student a long time ago, if they left for a period of time, they rarely returned. Dr. Carroll just to pivot you for a moment. You talked about College in 3 programs. Can you just talk about the impact that this has on costs and college debt for students how this helps them?

Lori Carrell

Absolutely. So the savings for students are up to one full year if they're residential students, that includes not only tuition and fees but also any costs for their residents in addition, most of these programs have embedded paid internships, and because the degree time is shorter, they begin their lifetime earnings as a professional sooner as well. So the overall financial benefit is quite significant.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)

You could argue that our cultural model for college to begin with go to college to experience college to figure out what you might want to do.

Lori Carrell

There are institutions and many of us within higher education who want to ensure that any such program is focused on learning, transformative learning, and is using evidence based practice? So the idea of simply lopping off some credits is not what college and three is about. We're working to use evidence based design that's focused on student learning and development to make not only a shorter program, but a better program. And that's, that's a reason that some might be fearful of attempting a three year degree.

Rep. Bob Good (R-Va.)
It's my time's up, but in my experience, the more immersed and saturated and more intense the program the more you retain, the more that it benefits you actually it's the exact opposite of stretching result when you stretch it out. Thank you, Madam Chairman. I yield back.


Thank you, Mr. Good. And I will take a short point of personal privilege here. I read the book won't lose the stream which about the program at Georgia, and if you read it you'll see that many schools could do the same thing that Georgia State has done, but they don't do it because they don't have the people they're willing to change to do what they've done. Short point of personal privilege.

Thank you very much, Dr. Adams.


Thank you, Madam Chair. And thank you to the Mr. Wilson, as well for calling this meeting. I just want to before I begin just say Mr. Schultz, I'm very familiar with what you all are doing. We certainly appreciate that. I'm very interested in your pillars and how that's working. Curious about what schools you might be working with in North Carolina.

Keith Shoates

We've got North Carolina. Thank you for your question, ma'am. Thank you very much. Just as a note, I was just sharing with Dr. Renick.

His program was one of the bases for our micro grant program that we have with Prudential, right fully funded by Prudential provide micro grants directly to the HBCUs including North Carolina Central is one of those schools we have in North Carolina. So that's kind of one of those we have.


Well thank you very much for that. Thank you for your work. I am a graduate twice at North Carolina A&T. Four the years I spent on campus and Bennett college so I'm very interested in higher education. Some Miss Erickson studies have shown the power of dual enrollment, concurrent enrollment in early college high school programs and improving college access and success.

So and I've read your testimony as well. So are you aware of any institutions that commit to students not incurring costs associated with participating in dual enrollment or early college programs and and can you discuss the importance of financially supporting students in dual enrollment programs?

Lanae Erickson

**Absolutely. I'm not aware of any specific schools that are doing that.**

Dr. Carroll might have more information about that. But I will say you know, finances are an important part of being able to be successful in higher education, obviously, but I think what we're learning from some of these studies and evidence that we've gathered from many of these successful programs is that it's it's only one piece. You also need to create cohorts so that students have a sense of belonging, you also need to help them navigate oftentimes, what what it means to structure a, you know Course load that will get them to the right place at the right time. As we've talked about, you know, about half of students are first generation college students and they might not have access to the kind of social capital to know how to navigate these, these complex decisions.
And so I think we should absolutely focus on the dual enrollment piece and really speeding up the time in college to whatever extent we can in the way that Dr. Carroll talked about, which is really focused on learning. But I also think it's important to think about institutional incentives and what we've done so far in higher education is essentially incentivize institutions to enroll students, and then had really no incentives whatsoever for them to actually make sure they succeeded. And I think it's really important that you know, this Congress has authorized the post secondary success grants. That is now really thinking about how do we get more schools to do what what Georgia State is doing and say, I'm not just gonna get paid when I get that button, the seat I'm gonna get paid when that person gets out, is successful, is able to get a job and pay back their loans.

And, and we know that a lot of the institutions that are doing the yeoman's work of educating underserved students don't have the money or resources to just put that outlay out there. And so I think, you know, the college completion fund is a really big step in that.

Rep. Alma Adams (D-N.C.)

Thank you. So let me ask what role do you see four year colleges and universities especially in partnership with community colleges and other providers? in promoting solutions in terms of driving innovation in higher education?

Lanae Erickson

You know, I think community colleges are a backbone of our system and are doing are serving so many of the students that otherwise might not automatically succeed within a higher education system.

But what we need to do is make sure that we're syncing up those two systems. We know that community colleges do incredible work. But we also know that having a four year degree is actually the best way to ensure economic mobility, particularly for underserved students. So making sure that those systems talk to each other, that you can transfer any credits that you got at your local community college to another system is super important, because many, many students I think most who enroll in community college at the outset, say they want a four year degree and that's just where they're starting.

So we need to think about that.

Rep. Alma Adams (D-N.C.)

Thank you very much. And before going out of time, I just want to you know, certainly appreciate all of the information regarding the innovation and and the the private programs but also believe that the government has a responsibility as well, in terms of of educating our youth and I appreciate all of the the other resources that are available, but they should not take precedence. I think government has a role there. So thank you very much, Madam Chair.

I yield back.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you, Dr. Adams. Miss Houchin, you're recognized for five minutes.

Rep. Erin Houchin (R-Ind.)

You, Madam Chair. Thank you to the witnesses for testifying before us today in alignment with this committee's continued effort for innovation, innovation and transparency in the higher education space. I want to discuss some of the ways my district and the state of Indiana are excelling in this area. Dr. Renick, like Georgia State University Indiana's Purdue University is also part of the university Innovation Alliance, which works to bring together the best ideas from leading research universities across the country.
What is the unique collaboration happening within the university Innovation Alliance? Why is that important?

Timothy Renick

Yeah, the university Innovation Alliance has existed now for almost a decade. And it was a unique partnership initially between 11 institutions. Both Purdue and Georgia State were founding members. The presidents got together and decided that they needed to do something to move the needle in significant ways on graduating especially low income students and students of color.

And the idea behind it is similar to some of what I've talked about, in my testimony, that there are a lot of new approaches out there that were not in our grasp as recently as five or six years ago. I mean, we weren't talking about using AI to support students or predictive analytics or CRM technologies and so forth. These institutions are all research institutions. And so they've gotten together and said, we can contribute to the national discussion by doing cutting edge research in the space.

We pioneered in the UIA initials studies of the use of predictive analytics back in 2000, and, you know, 12 and 13 and so forth, where these new approaches were just beginning to be used. We've also experimented with the uses of AI and chatbot, across the UAE as well. So it's an attempt to bring the powers of research institutions to the space that were discussing this morning.

Rep. Erin Houchin (R-Ind.)

Thank you and as a Representative of a very rural area with lots of low income families. I do appreciate the Innovation Alliance. I wanted to switch gears a little bit towards student loan crisis. As you probably know, student debt in the United States is now over 1.6 trillion with the average borrower owing over $37,000. We on our side of the aisle are opposed to this student loan, bail out student loans being free, paid for by the 87% of people who don't take out student loans, yet lose out due to the inflation of the cost of that, but I want to just touch on. Since 1980, the average cost of college has risen. college attendance has risen by 180%. Transparency on the cost of college is a theme that I continue to hear in constituent meetings.

I'd like to see more of that as we consider the higher education reauthorization in this Committee. Because we've seen things like transparency in college borrowing reduce cost, just this past year, Indiana University in my district established an academic tuition and fee taskforce to clarify the biennial process of setting tuition and fees for undergrad students, resulting in increased transparency and as an opportunity to find savings. Dr. Carroll, you mentioned in your testimony that decreasing student costs is one of the two challenges we must address in our conversations. Would you agree that transparency and student loans like what Indiana University has done with their academic tuition and fee task force should be included in our attempt to decrease student loan debt?

Lori Carrell

Thank you for the question. Born and raised a Hoosier appreciate what has been happening in Indiana related to higher edge innovation. And yes, I do think that that is a good model. And that transparency needs to be accompanied by clarity.

So particularly for first generation students, but for all of us the explanation of the costs of college, the total cost of the entire college experience and where those funds go, must be much more clear.

Rep. Erin Houchin (R-Ind.)

As a parent of a college student who's just navigated her first year. That would be appreciated by just me alone as a parent. In an effort for increased transparency, Indiana in 2015 passed a law requiring that every college
and university that participates in state aid programs must send annual student loan debt notification to borrowers today. 13 states have put this requirement into law this notification requirement has led to a 48% reduction in undergraduate student loans for Indiana residents since 2013, totaling 156 and a half million dollars.

Lori Carrell

Clarity and transparency would be well served.

Rep. Erin Houchin (R-Ind.)

Thank you. I look forward to continuing these conversations as part of this Committee as we continue to consider the higher education Reauthorization Act. And it's apparent to me that Indiana certainly has been a leader when it comes to college cost transparency, and I'm grateful for that as a Hoosier, thank you so much.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you, Michelle. Chair Miss Manning, you're recognized for five minutes.

Rep. Kathy Manning (D-N.C.)

Thank you. I'd like to thank our witnesses for being here today to talk about this really important subject, Miss Erickson I'd like to talk with start with you. A Research has consistently shown that there is a significant benefit to students when institutions provide meaningful, meaningful wraparound student support services, that that remove barriers to academic success. programs that address issues like food insecurity, child care, technology, and mental health issues, particularly benefit non traditional students who are increasingly entering higher education.

I was pleased to see that many institutions utilize their COVID relief funds to either begin implementing or scale up programs that provide wraparound supports. So can you share some examples of evidence based practices that contribute to wraparound student support?

Lanae Erickson

Absolutely. You know, CUNY ASAP is probably the most famous of the programs that provides these wraparound supports.

And I think the most important part of it is that it recognizes that students are people they have a lot going on in their lives. They have to get to and from school they have to get to and from work they have to care for children or elders or other family members. They have a lot going on. And and they have shown that when you pair financial small financial supports, with what they call intrusive advising, which I think maybe needs a better title because that's a not particularly nice sounding one, but it means you follow the student and they have a relationship with an academic advisor throughout their period of time, who also helps them get access to other things.

They may need food stamps, Medicare, Medicaid, other things that they might need just as a human or as a family. They have seen that they have been able to double their graduation rates through this program, which I think is just incredible, because we've talked about the importance of getting that degree and so many of the folks that are defaulting on their student loans are in real trouble, or the folks that signed up got debt and then never got a degree and so they can't really get the wage gain to to get it back. So I think those those kinds of wraparound supports are so important. You know, I know that the COVID funding helped 18 million students stay enrolled, in particular, mostly at public universities, and 80% of HBCU students were helped by that funding.
So in an awful time for our country and an awful time for those students. Congress was able to step up and support and I know New America has done some fantastic research on the fact that hiring social workers for students that were in need, has seriously amped up their ability to serve their students, even students that they didn't know were in need before. And so I think providing those kinds of support services and recognizing that students are humans is absolutely essential.

Rep. Kathy Manning (D-N.C.)

Proud to have in my district, the largest HBCU in North Carolina A&T State University. I also have one of the largest minority serving universities, University of North Carolina at Greensboro and I was shocked to see at one of my visits to UNC Greensboro that there is a food bank that is regularly used by students who simply don't have the money to buy their food. I want to move into a different area, high school has emerged as a critical recruitment source for colleges as well as trades, technical schools, accreditation programs, and other post secondary pathways for a variety of different careers. I have in my district, a lot of advanced manufacturing and we know that people cannot fill those jobs unless they have some secondary training because those those skill jobs need more than a high school degree.

High schools are also critical points of entry to recruit students into fields where we're currently facing workforce shortages. And I see that all across my district, whether we're talking about teachers or childcare providers, skilled trades, nursing, social work, school psychologists, so how can Congress further support programs that expose students to different career paths early on, and where should we start exposing them to these career opportunities?

Lanae Erickson

You know, I think the best example that I've experienced is the DC public school system. DC public schools has created a system of support where every single person that is in high school in Washington DC, has to put together a college or career plan and they do it very early so that they can start tailoring their education in high school to what their their career or their postgraduate studies might be. And then creating partnerships with with private entities with employers who need those folks to fill those jobs. And I sat through a one of the career plan workshops in DC public school, that it was astounding, the level of kind of interaction and technology and learning that these folks were doing while they were sophomores in high school learning how to really do a job that would then pay them well and I think we would really be encouraged to fund those programs, encourage private partners to fund those programs so that we can have access to that for more students.

Rep. Kathy Manning (D-N.C.)

You so much. My time has expired. I yield back.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you, Miss Manning. Mr. Thompson, you're recognized for five minutes.

Rep. G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.)

Thank you Madam Chair and thank you all of our witnesses for your time here today. While the COVID 19 pandemic exposed many issues in our education system. One surprising aspect was how easily many post secondary institutions were able to transition to remote learning. And this was largely due to the fact that even before the pandemic, online education was growing rapidly growing, with at least 3.5 million post secondary students enrolled exclusively in distance learning in the fall of 2019.

At least 7.3 million students taking at least one distance learning course, online education is here to stay for those who want it. As co Chair of the congressional elearning caucus, I'm committed to bringing together
education stakeholders from all areas of the elearning ecosystem, and identifying improvements we can make to allow quality elearning to grow and succeed. Dr. Carrell, I was impressed by your college in three design. And I'm wondering if you have incorporated Online Learning at an all to help achieve the goals of the program.

Lori Carrell

Thank you for that. Question. We are supported by a novel platform that we co created with Google Cloud and some of the learning is hybrid, where as the initial learning is fully in person, we are really very much focused on the quality of the learning the quality of the teaching, and the quality of the student development experience. While we were in development of the program, the pandemic led Mayo Clinic to make some of their positions fully remote and as such some of the internships that are paid and then embedded within our program became remote.

And so we are in the process of studying the effectiveness of those remote internships as part of what we're doing, but appreciate your focus on quality within elearning. And I think there's a lot for all of us to learn and then to apply those results as we move forward.

Rep. G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.)

Thank you for that. Have you found that it is easier for students to complete degrees on time? If Distance Learning is a part of their program?

Lori Carrell

Think it's important to talk about at least two different types of students, students who are coming straight from high school and students who are returning adult learners. And the answers vary based on the type of student and I think that's an important part of what the work you'll be doing.

Rep. G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.)

Any thoughts on how we can effectively expand online learning opportunities at other institutions of higher education including career and technical education?

Lori Carrell

I think a great opportunity at present is returners students who started college and did not complete and creating evidence based design programs that support their completion in ways that meet important workforce demands at present.

Rep. G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.)

That's a great pointers. I think a significant percentage of folks for various reasons, life circumstances, whatever that that accrual accrue some education and quite frankly, some debt but you know, when they drop out or discontinue, there's absolutely no return on investment. And it seems like it'd be a great tool to help with. Dr. Renick, want to turn to you to now to discuss integrating students into the workforce and ensuring that they have the necessary skills to succeed and match the needs other other employees. I believe the lack of focus on preparing students for the workforce and conversations surrounding higher education has been a detriment to students and employers wide and so what changes would you suggest we make to the work study programs to ensure program are more valuable to students as educational experiences?

Timothy Renick

Yeah, one of the it's a great question. Thank you. One of the challenges we face at large institution like Georgia State with 52,000 students is scaling meaningful experiences for our students. So one of the things we're doing with work study is layering on top of it.
A program by which the work study experience of the student in the campus assignment is also part of an educational experience. We’re working with the supervisors of these work study students so that they can be getting the students to think about what kinds of skills they’re learning that are going to be marketable and useful once they hit the workforce.

Rep. G.T. Thompson (R-Pa.)

Yeah, and I think that obviously has soft skills, but it’s also the hard skills and we can make that match all the better. I want to thank you and I look forward to working with all of you to continue this conversation and come up with constructive solutions to these issues to improve outcomes for our students. Thank you so much.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you, Mr. Thompson. Mr. Scott, you’re recognized for five minutes.

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)

Thank you. Dr. Renick. One of the problems you’ve been trying to address a long time is completion and the numbers you put up are very impressive. It’s not easy to achieve and you rely on a lot of data.

What kind of data do you need? What kind of data points do you need? And does that data exist in most colleges?

Timothy Renick

I think that yeah, thank you for that question. I think the reality is we’re working as I mentioned with 40 institutions across the the National Institute for student success, the prevailing problem is not a lack of data. It’s a lack of operationalizing the data that the campuses already have, in some cases, they’re overwhelmed with data that’s being produced by systems and platforms on a day to day basis. What the institute is trying to help these campuses recognize is you can produce really high level data, but if it’s not in the hands of people making decisions in a timely fashion, it’s not going to be beneficial to the students or to the institution.

And so what we’re working on are finding ways to give decision makers the data they need to make informed decisions. It’s not just administrators and faculty members or students themselves.

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)

What kind of data points are you talking about?

Timothy Renick

Well, before for instance, one of the things we’re doing with students while they’re in their first year at Georgia State is making sure they understand what is happening in the marketplace with live data. So if they’re majoring in political science, we’re sharing with students what political science graduates of Georgia State are doing, what companies they’re working for, what organizations what title, what their salaries are, and we’re doing that in the first year so that when they’re making decisions about their majors, they have the the kind of information they need. To be informed, rather than telling a senior all of a sudden that their expectations are very different than the reality.

Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)

Are you talking about data like attendance and class attendance?

Timothy Renick
Well, in the case of the example I was just citing, we're using a company called Stepping blocks to scrape data from publicly accessible websites like LinkedIn, to find our alums and then translate that data back to our current students so they know what our alums are doing.

**Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)**

How would you know if a student is of concern? I mean, if you've got data that they're skipping class or falling behind. How would you know what kind of data points do you know to flag people for concern? Battle?

**Timothy Renick**

Almost all academic courses at post secondary institutions now involve using learning management platforms? We're tracking as early as the first week of classes, which students are signed up for classes but not interacting electronically with those platforms. We can even look at log ons into the Georgia State web system. If a student is taking on on campus classes but not logging on to the website.

We'll reach out maybe nothing's wrong. Maybe they had no reason to be on the learning management system or the website. But the idea is to catch these problems early on. If you find the problems in the first week, you can get the student to support and you can get them caught up to where does it go to support me with the support means it depends upon what we're finding, but if a student's not engaged in their classes in the first week we will ask them, Is it because you don't have the right technology? Is it because you're facing a financial crisis? Are you going through something emotionally?

**Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)**

To require costs like counselors or do you use peers?

**Timothy Renick**

We have greatly expanded our advising staff at Georgia State. In fact, we've moved from about 40 full time counselors to over 100 But those have been paid for by the increase in tuition and fee revenues that come from graduating. 3500 more students every year because those were 300 or 3000 students whose revenues in effect we're walking away from the university. So we've reinvested the gains we've made in tuition and fee revenues back into the students and the kinds of supports that the evidence show they most need.

**Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.)**

Thank you, Miss Erickson. Is you aware a lot of the short term programs are not eligible for Pell Grants, and we're looking at ways to make those affordable. What guardrails and protections should we be thinking about in that context?

**Lanae Erickson**

Thank you so much.

I think that it is important that we think about pathways into the workforce that are sustainable and good quality that aren't a four year degree. And I know that folks on both sides of the aisle are looking at the expansion of Pell grants to shorter term programs. I think the question is, are those programs going to set students up to actually earn more than if they hadn't gone there in the first place? And so I think it's really important to look, not just a completion because if it's an eight week program, it's pretty easy to complete.
But whether that student is able to then earn more, more than the average high school graduate in their state. I know that that's a guardrail that is included in your legislation, and I think it's one that's really important also looking at, you know, do they are they able to pay back any loans that they might have taken out for other programs, you know, students are moving from program to program. So it's really important to look at the earnings thresholds. To make sure that we're not actually signing folks up for programs that then leave them worse off than they would have been.

Had they never gone. Thank you.


Thank you, Mr. Scott. Mr. Leger Fernandez, you're recognized for five minutes.

**Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D-N.M.)**

Thank you so much, Madam Chair. And thank you for the expertise and insights you're sharing with us today. And you know, what we do know is that we want to make sure that we grow our middle class, right that we invest in America, and we do that by investing in our most valuable resource. We have, which is our students, which is us, right?

Invest in us, invest in our communities, invest in our families. And so, you know, I think that what we're talking a lot of what we're talking about today is how do you make those investments and how do you make sure that they are they are accomplishing that goal, why of helping everybody to help grow that that middle class and so we know that students from low income backgrounds and those whose parents don't have college experience that they are less likely than their peers to enroll in? College, and sometimes less likely to complete? And in New Mexico 40% of post secondary students are first generation and many of them find themselves navigating this system which is not easy why it's from the faster this and that So Miss Erickson Can you tell us a little bit about what the consequences are of inequities in college access, and success for income inequality and social mobility?

Because that's what we want to do. We want to bring that that social, economic inequality growth that middle class, can you share a bit with us?

**Lanae Erickson**

Absolutely. I think that you know, what, we really see a stratification across our higher education system and we've done a lot of work, looking at economic mobility that different types of institutions provide I think, why a lot of us really focus on minority serving institutions and HBCUs in particular, is that they're great mobility engines, but not all schools are and I think some of the schools that we hear about the most that, you know, maybe most of the staff that work in the hit on the Hill went to enroll almost no Pell students, and that's really abominable.

Those are the schools that have the resources to provide mobility to students that have lower incomes or might have greater needs, and they're not doing the work and so I don't think we should be rewarding them for perpetuating economic inequality by only enrolling folks that don't need the help that they give. But we do need to really focus on those institutions that are doing the yeoman's work of creating economic mobility, and make sure that we're focused on student success, not just access. You know, I think we often asked on our team access to what, and just getting through the door doesn't necessarily mean you're going to end up with a quality credential or something that's going to allow you to complete get into the workforce and pay back those loans and too often because of the voucher system we've created within you know, the Pell Grant program, which we spend $30 billion on a year. It we're actually incentivizing bad actors and predatory programs, to go after students who do have that access to the Pell Grant, and then really not provide them any return on investment and frankly, I think that's very frustrating because that's my money, what's not giving the taxpayers any return on investment either.
So I think the the gainful employment rule that the administration has just put out, looking at, you know, if you're a career program, do you leave most of your graduates able to make enough money that they can pay back their taxpayer funded debt? That's a really good step and there are others. But we have to be able to look at the outcomes for those students, not just whether they're getting in the door because oftentimes the worst outcome is they get in the door, they fail out and then you know, they're left with debt that they can't repay.

**Rep. Teresa Leger Fernandez (D-N.M.)**

Another little piece of that, how do you succeed because we just finished over the last couple, just a few days ago, when you think about about 10 days ago thinking about, like, how do we make sure that you are able to learn and we know that for that's why we have the nutrition in schools programs. That's why we have Snap, we really need to make sure that you are able to learn and we know that there are too many students post secondary students who are homeless and who are hungry, and we need to address that that's true in New Mexico, where we have 60% of higher education, students are food insecure, and 20% of graduate students like they know what their goal is, but they don't have a place to live. So I wanted to, I see that my time's up, but I will send these questions so that you could send us written answers to the panel about this of how do we how do we address these basic living needs, so that those students can actually realize the success that higher higher education should provide? Thank you.


Thank you, Miss Linda Fernandez. I'll recognize myself for five minutes. Dr. Rennick I followed your work at Georgia State University for years on pleasing universities now able to share your experience expertise with other institutions across the country through the National Institute. for student success and just make sure we get into the record.

The book won't lose the stream by Andrew Gumbel about what what George state did. In this Committee, we've been trying to change the dialogue that not every American needs to immediately enroll in a university to receive a bachelor's degree. I do believe in lifelong learning. And if an individual has been educated, I believe it's important for them to receive some sort of credential.

You mentioned in your testimony that Georgia State consolidated with a large community college as a former Community College president, myself, I'm very interested in how community colleges are tackling today's challenges. What are students success strategies that community colleges or even shorter term education providers can utilize to ensure their students successfully earn a credential?

**Timothy Renick**

Yeah, thank you for that question. I appreciate that. There are a lot of differences between students in a place like Georgia State has the whole spectrum from age and race, endemic demographics and so forth. But what we're seeing with our consolidation with Perimeter College, the community college partner is that there are more similarities between students than differences and what students need in order to succeed are clear pathways.

They need guidance. If they go off path they need somebody to be watching and making sure that we get them back on path again. They need these micro grants the kind of data based approaches to providing financial aid what perhaps has been not fully appreciated as well. Georgia State has improved its graduation rates by 70%.

That was over a law over a decade of time. What we've done at Perimeter College in five years was basically tripled the graduation rate. So these students that are often under resourced are even more needful of the kind of proactive supports and the use of data and the use of technology to serve them. Far, far higher percentage of our community college students are working.
Have our parents have parents or siblings they're responsible for and they need these kinds of supports that are delivered to them. 24/7 are delivered to them where they don't have to go into some office at three o'clock in the afternoon to get that targeted support. That's what we're seeing at the community colleges.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

As you were talking earlier about data I thought about there's a lot of data out there sometimes not enough information. And the other thing was high tech, high touch. We've known for a long time you need to do High Tech High touch. Mr. Schultz, the student.

The student freedom Initiative is a very exciting thing that I did not know about until this hearing came up. It shows this strong leadership nonprofits can harness private sector funding to support dozens of HBCUs and MSI. Have there been any barriers to your work?

Keith Shoates

Ma'am, ma'am, thank you for the question. The barriers that we've seen are not the typical barriers that you would expect to come out of the program. Part of what we want to do is just as you indicated, people don't know what we're doing. Right?

Yes, we actually provide all the wraparound services that are being spoken about here today. Yes, we provide the micro grants support. Yes, we provide internships and certification programs such that students leave with two paid internships, not just more advantageous of form of private education loan, but they have to paid internships. They have micro grants, but in addition to actually working with the students, we actually expand the capacity of the institutions through helping them expand their endowments helping make sure that they have broadband, making sure that the students actually have the underlying capacity at the institution to help them be successful.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Great. One of the challenges we have as policymakers is convincing stakeholders to abandoned status quo policies that don't help students and exacerbate the college costs problem. One of those policies is Parent Plus loans. What do you say to those who want to hold on to old policies like Parent Plus loans, and do not want to embrace new private financial products, such as SFI's alternative to Parent Plus loans?

Keith Shoates

I'm watching the clock. So in the interest of time again, another good question what we did is we actually went and listened to the students to the faculty, staff and executive leadership. And as part of the standing up their program we spoke to probably 15 or 20 of the institutional leads and found out from them what options make best sense for their students? Do they need wraparound services?

Yes. Do they need a means by which to have meaningful work? experience while they're in college? Yes, internships, do they need to find ways to enhance or upskill before they graduate?

Yes. So we actually listen to the students, faculty and staff in designed a program specifically to meet their needs.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you. Dr. Carol. My time is just about up. But I do want to compliment you as a transformative leader, and to thank you for what you have done.
You’ve certainly abandoned the status quo and your university and we’re very, very proud of you and thank you so much for being here. And I I think also you miss Erickson for coming. With that. I would like to recognize Mr. Allen for five minutes.

Rep. Rick Allen (R-Ga.)

I think the Chairwoman for waving me on for these questions and I think our witnesses today and for what you’re doing for young people in this country, Ms. Carol particularly I'm thrilled for this Committee to highlight the innovative work institutions are undertaking to develop three year degrees. Let me highlight one more. I'm proud to say that in my district, the Medical College of Georgia at Augusta University has led the way in medical school innovation through the creation of an accelerated medical school curriculum known as MC G three plus program. As we all know, the entire country is fuzzy is facing a physician shortage and while physicians are in short supply everywhere, the lack of providers in rural areas is especially severe, which is a majority of my district.

In order to quickly address the physician pipeline, McG three plus creates individualized medical education tracks for undergraduate students to prepare them more quickly with the competencies they need. For the MD program. McG three place offers a three year degree primary care pathway for students who commit to primary care practice in rural or underserved Georgia. These students graduate in three years and immediately enter a residency and receive a scholarship for their services in rural areas.

Students can also choose the dual degree pathway, which allows them to complete their undergraduate degree in three years and spend the fourth year earning a master's degree aligned with AP academic medicine, such as a master's degree in public health. And lastly, students can now choose a pathway that allows their fourth year to be spent on one side at one to 350 Clinical Education locations and hospitals and practices across Georgia, affording students the opportunity for advanced clinical and research preparation in their specialty of choice that Carol as you detail in your testimony. Developing three year degrees takes a lot of partnerships. Dr. Brooks kill President of Augusta University and other leaders at the Medical College of Georgia champion this three year degree model across our state.

Can you speak about the importance of continued leadership for advancing relevant education opportunities? And offering advice or commendation to those at Augusta University?

Lori Carrell

I’d like to have a conversation with them. To be sure that sounds like a wonderful and innovative program. What has been imperative for us is to ensure that the conversations we have are broad and that there is great representation from the employer partners and from those who will be served by the graduates as well as the students themselves and with faculty. They're listening as the designers we've needed to put into place a structured partnership with regular meetings that support adaptation as we go because as we try these new kinds of programs, we will absolutely learn as we go and we'll need to adapt so staying agile through continued conversation that is structured and built into the partnership will be really imperative but I look forward to hearing about the success of that program.

Rep. Rick Allen (R-Ga.)

Thank you. Mr. Shoates is online education becomes a preference for many students and adult learners. We’re all reminded many students lack access to rural broadband. In fact, eliminating rural broadband deserts.

In Georgia has been a top priority of my time here in Congress. Can you talk more about how the partner institutions you work with and becoming a catalyst to bring broadband to their communities, while also equipping the institution itself to offer online education?

Keith Shoates
Thank you for the question. One of the areas that we're working with in our MSI capacity building area is exactly as you indicated at 2%, as identified by McKinsey of our HBCUs are sitting in broadband deserts. Broadband deserts are defined not just to be connectivity and pipes, but also digital literacy Workforce Development alike so we understand and appreciate the concern that you have. And so as part of that activity, whether it be in South Carolina was Claflin or as part of the bead and D activities.

We're working with some 10 institutions as we speak, leading up to as many as 70, whereby we're actually supporting the activities that they have to ensure that they actually can take advantage of the broadband equity access and deployment activities as well as the D the digital equity funds to ensure that they can actually reduce the digital divide that they have in these communities. And yes, some of the rural areas in Georgia are on that list.

Rep. Rick Allen (R-Ga.)

Exactly. And we're working hard to get that done. Dr. Annika, thank you for also being here today and representing our great state of Georgia and higher education. I'm glad all of my colleagues get to hear about the great student success work done at Georgia State University, my son in law, played soccer and graduated from Georgia State University.

I think he's on the athletic board there. But thank you, Madam Chairman, and I yield back.

Rep. Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.)

Thank you very much, Mr. Allen. We're pleased to have you wave on to the Committee today. I want to say thank you again to our witnesses and to all our members who came. We're extremely interested in the idea of innovations.

The goal, I think on both sides of the aisle here is to help students succeed, gain credential credentials, gain degrees, get good jobs and be contributing members to our society. And we're looking for all the ways that that can be accomplished. Thank you very much. There being no further business.

The Committee stands adjourned.