

Senator Mitch McConnell  
371 A Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington DC 20510-1702

Dear Senator McConnell:

My name is Sheila Driver. I am a graduate of Draughons Junior College in Bowling Green, Kentucky. When I first began college, I was very anxious and somewhat scared. As a child, I was always told that I would never amount to anything and that I would never achieve my dreams. I thought this statement to be true for almost ten years. As I began to get older, I started to realize that I had just as much of a chance as anyone else. I wanted to prove to be my family and myself that I could do anything and be anything I wanted to be. So I finished my GED diploma, and I began my journey. Now that I have a degree, I'm ready for more. Having a job is not enough. I want to be able to look at my son and for him to be look back at me and be proud. Having an education is something that no one will ever be able to take away or rob me of. I always thought that I would have to work in a factory like my parents and never get the satisfaction of having a career that worked for me. Having options increases opportunities that I otherwise would not have. Choices are made more easily when there is more than just one to choose from, which is what education has done for me. I am graduating with an associate's degree of science. I feel like my life is just getting started.

To me, an education is as important as love; in order to make it work for you, you have to work hard at it. I will always let my son know that he can be anything he wants to be and that his mom and dad will always be there for him to back him up. Knowing that I will be able to afford to send my son to college and help him advance in his future career is beyond rewarding—rewarding because he will have a head start on life and not have to work about how he's going to pay for his water bill or his rent for the next like I have had to do.

Financial Aid has made the advancement into my career possible. If it were not for all the grants and loans available to me, I probably would not have had the great and fortunate opportunity to go to college. My family was very working class. Most of the time, all we had was enough to pay bills and at times no money for food. I remember when I was little, and I would see other little kids wearing nice clothes and eating at nice restaurants. All I could think about was, "Why isn't it me?" I didn't understand at the time that those things cost money, and money was something my parents just didn't have. It is a blessing to have all this government help. Loaning money and preparing grants for the people of this country is very much appreciated and still very much needed. The Bill that was proposed stating, "It would extend the authorization of programs under The Higher Education Act of 1965, I believe is very much needed. If we could extend these programs, it would still help out so many individuals who want to either get more education or further their education. Increasing funding of financial aid is a must. If it is increased, it would allow for many more citizens who have more opportunities to get educated and be more prominent citizens in society. This would boost employment and increase morale. All in all, education is a gift, and in order to distribute this gift, there has to be someone willing

to give and help in paying for it. Who else is going to do it if it's not the ones who run our great country?

In closing, I would just like to say that I appreciate and thank you for all of the hard work and progress you have made. I think that creating a way for people to get an education is very noble and caring. I hope you keep up all of the good work and remember that what you do affects a lot of people just like we voters affect our country!

Sincerely,

Sheila Driver