

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 8, 2004

Dear Colleague:

We are writing to invite you to join us in signing the attached letter to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Appropriations Subcommittee in support of a significant increase in funding for the TRIO Programs in the fiscal year 2005.

As you may know, the TRIO Programs were authorized under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to support our nation's commitment to providing educational opportunities for all Americans. More than 1,200 colleges, universities and agencies offer TRIO Programs throughout the United States, and an estimated two million TRIO students have graduated from college. However, even with all of this success, the TRIO Programs currently only serve an estimated 7 percent of those students who are eligible for the programs.

While the TRIO Programs provide a continuum of educational outreach and support services to low-income, first-generation students from middle school through college, they cannot continue to expand these services to all eligible students without a significant increase in their annual appropriations.

As we strive to demonstrate the broad, bi-partisan support that exists for TRIO in the Senate, please join us in helping to expand TRIO services to more students in need by signing the attached letter calling for a significant increase in funding for the program.

If you have questions or would like to add your name, please contact Lori Neal with Sen. Lincoln at 224-4843 or Anne Hickey with Sen. Collins at 224-2523 by Monday, March 29th, 2004.

Sincerely,



Blanche L. Lincoln



Susan M. Collins