



Attacks on American Higher Education Talking Points for Advocates

The field of higher education has faced a number of attacks from leaders in Washington, D.C. in recent months. From reducing student financial aid to eliminating the Department of Education and cutting federal research funding to the bone, support and funding for higher education has been drastically reduced in a matter of months. These challenges pose both short and long-term risks to colleges such as Landmark, including potential reductions in federally supported programming and research that is valuable to the LD community, both on-campus and around the world.

KEY FACTS AND SUGGESTED TALKING POINTS

In light of recent events, we recommend emphasizing the following points with members of your Congressional delegation:

- **Make college more – not less – affordable.** From eliminating subsidized direct student loans to restricting eligibility for the Pell Grant program, proposals that recently passed the House of Representatives in reconciliation would make college less affordable for millions of students and families.¹
- **Restore funding for the National Science Foundation (NSF)**, which is the primary funder of academic research in America and a key driver of positive outcomes across fields, from health to industrial innovation to education. Economists have found that every \$1 invested through NSF leads to approximately \$2 in economic output, and that 50% of America’s economic growth can be attributed to R&D investment, for which NSF is key.²
 - Note: Landmark College has received several prestigious and financially significant grants from the NSF in recent years, most vitally from the NSF S-STEM and E-CORE programs.
- **Preserve free-speech protections for international students**, because students should not fear detention or deportation over speaking at a peaceful protest or authoring an opinion piece in their student newspaper.³
- **Do not eliminate the federal Department of Education**, which colleges rely upon to administer the FAFSA and facilitate the distribution of financial aid to eligible students. From trade schools to PhD programs, over 40 million Americans currently hold federal student loans that have passed through the Department of Education.⁴

¹ American Council on Education | June 5, 2025 | [“Student Success and Taxpayer Savings Plan”](#)

² Society for Neuroscience | Accessed June 2025 | [“Funding for the National Science Foundation”](#)

³ American Civil Liberties Union | April 14, 2025 | [“Writing an Op-Ed is Not Grounds for Deportation”](#)

⁴ National Consumer Law Center | March 20, 2025 | [“Shutting Down the Department of Education Threatens Students and Working Families Who Rely on Federal Student Aid”](#)



SUGGESTED CALL SCRIPT

“Hi, my name is [NAME], I live in [TOWN OR COUNTY WITHIN MEMBER’S DISTRICT], and I am calling to ask that [REPRESENTATIVE OR SENATOR] please OPPOSE efforts to dismantle higher education in America. Recent proposals and executive orders will make college more expensive, set back scientific research and development by decades, hurt our economy, and undermine basic freedoms for international students. Please stand up to protect our students and the economic engine of communities across the country. Thank you for your time today.”

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

On this topic

- National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (NAICU): [Reconciliation Advocacy Center](#)
- American Council on Education (ACE): [Reconciliation Toolkit](#)

On citizen advocacy in general

- USA.gov: [How laws are made](#)
- Center for American Women and Politics: [How to Lobby Your Legislator](#)
- University of Illinois System: [10 Tips for Effective Lobbying](#)

Note: This document was last updated on June 5, 2025.