



August 16, 2024

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The Honorable Bill Cassidy
United States Senate
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Cassidy:

I wanted to reach out to you in light of your recent letter to the Department of Education’s Office of Inspector General requesting an investigation into how institutions of higher education are spending federal funds to hire and retain employees to advance diversity, equity and inclusion initiatives at colleges and universities. As a nonprofit organization committed to the preservation of academic freedom, excellence, and accountability, the American Council of Trustees and Alumni (ACTA) shares your observation that reckless spending inhibits institutions of higher education ability to offer a quality education at an affordable price for students.

The national student debt crisis is fundamentally an institutional spending crisis with DEI expenditures on staff and programs an important contributing factor that causes budgets to inflate drastically as your letter rightly noted. For your consideration, I would like to provide you with a copy of *The Cost of Excess: Why Colleges and Universities Must Control Runaway Spending*, a comprehensive analysis of college spending trends and the impact spending has on tuition and student success. To compile this report, ACTA analyzed data from more than 1,500 four-year public and private, nonprofit colleges and universities. **The data reveal that institutional spending has continued to surge alongside tuition but has contributed little to improve graduation rates.**

To assist policymakers further, ACTA created a webtool that allows users to analyze instructional and administrative spending trends at over 1,500 institutions and create benchmarks in comparison with other schools. I encourage you to visit **www.HowCollegesSpendMoney.com** to learn more about this spending crisis.

If there is anything we can do to help your efforts in combatting inconceivable spending practices at our nation’s institutions, or in any matter in the future, please do not hesitate to reach out to me at **(202) 467-6787** or via email at **MPoliakoff@goacta.org**.

We are immensely grateful for your commitment to American higher education.

Warm Regards,

Michael B. Poliakoff, Ph.D.
President

Enclosures

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1730 M Street NW, Suite 600 Washington, DC 20036

T (202) 467-6787; (888) ALUMNI-8 F (202) 867-6784 info@GoACTA.org GoACTA.org