

## February 27, 2007 Pell Grant Equity Act

The Honorable Loretta Sanchez

PELL GRANT EQUITY ACT OF 2007

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Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 990--The Pell Grant Equity Act of 2007. This legislation is a simple measure to reduce the real and perceived barriers to a higher education for many low-income families across the United States.

Community colleges and other low-cost institutions offer life-changing educational opportunities for motivated students. Pell grant recipients are by definition motivated.

The Pell grant program works as a contract between the Federal Government and the individual. The Government says, "we will provide you with the means to get a higher education if you desire to invest in yourself."

Removing the tuition sensitivity provision of the Higher Education Act will help students cover the full cost of attending college, which is significantly higher than tuition alone.

For over 30 years, Congress has consistently increased funding available to the Pell grant program and increased the maximum grant that each student can receive. Why? Because the program works. Pell grant recipients regularly go on to succeed in jobs with career potential and upward mobility.

Increased access to higher education is an important goal for the Congress because having an educated workforce is essential to our country's future. As former Federal Reserve Chairman Alan Greenspan once said to me, "if our people are educated there isn't a problem we can't solve. If they aren't, there isn't one that we can." Eliminating tuition sensitivity from the Pell grant program is a positive step towards making college education available to everyone who wants one, and there isn't a higher goal than that.