

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

August 27, 2025

Gene L. Dodaro
Comptroller General of the United States
U.S. Government Accountability Office
441 G Street NW
Washington, DC 20548

Dear Mr. Dodaro,

I write to request that the Government Accountability Office (GAO) investigate whether the Trump administration's decision to place a hold on Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) grants is in compliance with the Impoundment Control Act.

Established by Congress in 1998, CCAMPIS is the only Federal program dedicated solely to providing child care assistance for low-income students in postsecondary settings. Nearly 4 million college students are parents of dependent children, representing more than one in five undergraduates — or 22 percent of all undergraduates — in the United States.¹ Parenting students struggle to pay for child care on top of the growing cost of tuition, fees, course materials, housing, food and other expenses. Access to affordable child care is one of the most important supports that can help parenting students succeed in college. Congress has long recognized the utility of supporting the participation of low-income parents in postsecondary education by ensuring affordable and convenient campus-based child care services, and has consistently voted on a bipartisan basis to appropriate millions of dollars in funding for CCAMPIS each year.

Despite a long history of bipartisan support, the Trump administration called for the elimination of CCAMPIS in the President's Fiscal Year 2026 Discretionary Budget Request. Further, the U.S. Department of Education (ED) — which typically opens applications for CCAMPIS grants in May and closes them at the end of July each year and typically issues notices to advise applicants and awardees about potential delays or changes to the program — has yet to announce this year's applications. Institutions that have reached out to ED for more information have been reportedly met with vague answers. With the 2025-2026 academic year quickly approaching, and no clear indication regarding the state of this program, thousands of parents are now forced to make a difficult decision of whether or not to enroll in school without knowing if they will be able to afford child care services.

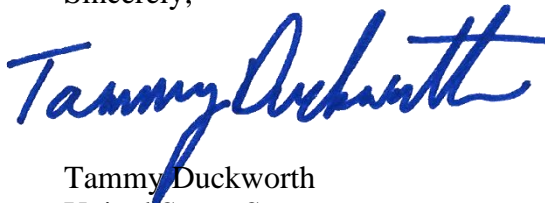
The power of the purse belongs solely to Congress, and Congress has seen fit to annually allocate funding for CCAMPIS. It is my view that the administration's withholding of these

¹ Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR) analysis of data from the U.S. Department of Education (September 2017), National Center for Education Statistics. National Postsecondary Student Aid Study and the Integrated Postsecondary Aid Survey (IPEDS). Retrieved from https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/C481_Parents-in-College-By-the-Numbers-Aspen-Ascend-and-IWPR.pdf

funds is an illegal impoundment with severe implications for the students and institutions of higher education that rely on this vital program. While the Impoundment Control Act grants the President limited authority to impound or withhold budget authority in specific circumstances, I believe the administration has exceeded this statutory authority. With the passage of the Impoundment Control Act of 1974, Congress entrusted GAO with the important responsibility of reviewing and reporting delays or withholdings of funding by the President. In keeping with this mandate, it is imperative that GAO conduct and publish its own independent review of the Trump administration's handling of CCAMPIS funding.

For the thousands of low-income parents depending on CCAMPIS as they work to attain a degree, certificate or credential, the withholding of these funds represents a steep barrier in access to education and economic security for themselves and their families. I respectfully request that GAO investigate the administration's actions and their consistency with the Impoundment Control Act. Thank you very much for considering this important request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Tammy Duckworth". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Tammy" being more prominent than the last name "Duckworth".

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator