



September 16, 2025

Senator Markwayne Mullin
United States Senate
330 Hart Senate Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Mullin,

We are writing to share the major negative impact of the recent announcements about the elimination of Minority-Serving Institution (MSI) discretionary grant programs, including the Native American-Serving Nontribal (NASNTI) grants. At the Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges (OACC), eight of our twelve member institutions receive these grants to fund services that benefit students attending these colleges. These grants have been vital to strengthening these members' ability to serve all students and fulfill their missions.

We want to clarify a common misunderstanding about these valuable programs. While institutions qualify for NASNTI designation based on the percentage of Native American students enrolled, the grant funds themselves do not go exclusively for minority students. These resources support the entire institution, providing dollars that benefit all students. These funds are not dispersed to individuals for scholarships; these funds are utilized by the schools to improve the institutions' abilities to serve every student enrolled at the colleges.

Colleges across the state face significant impacts from the U.S. Department of Education's decision to end discretionary funding for Minority-Serving Institution grant programs. Specifically, several institutions including Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College, Carl Albert State College, Eastern Oklahoma State College, Western Oklahoma State College, and Redlands Community College stand to lose substantial annual support tied to NASNTI grants canceled by the cuts announced last week. Another NASNTI institution, Northern Oklahoma College's current grant was not directly impacted this round but raised concerns about the future of their Part F grant funding in the future.

These NSANTI funds currently sustain staff positions and provide vital student services, particularly for underrepresented and rural populations. In addition, some of these institutions are also experiencing delays in federal funding notices for other federal grants. The uncertainty around both discontinued programs and delayed awards is creating immediate challenges for institutional planning, staffing, and service delivery, with potentially far-reaching effects on student access and success.

For OACC institutions, NASNTI funds have been used to improve nursing education programs, mental health services, expand student success coaching, improve tutoring and academic support services, learning management systems, enhance classroom technology, and provide faculty and staff development. These initiatives impact every student on our campuses, regardless of background or race. Removing these funds would undercut essential services that improve retention, graduation, and workforce readiness at a time when our communities and state need them most.

We are proud of the role OACC institutions play in educating a diverse student body and preparing graduates who contribute to the Oklahoma economy. Continued federal support through MSI programs ensures that Oklahoma Community Colleges and others like ours across the nation can fulfill our missions. These resources enable our schools to be innovative and responsive to the needs of all students desiring to earn a degree or credential to enter the workforce.


We urge you to oppose any effort to eliminate these programs and to work toward preserving the critical federal investment in colleges and universities. We serve all populations across our entire state including the underserved populations. Loss of these funds will mean immediate loss of services for students and the immediate loss of employees who provide critical services for all students.

We also wanted to share with you that Oklahoma is uniquely impacted by this decision. According to the U.S. Department of Education's 2025 eligibility matrix, Oklahoma has more Native American-Serving Nontribal Institutions than any other state in the country - a total of 13 public colleges and universities. Ending this program harms our state and the students we serve. Eight of these institutions that qualify for NSANTI funding are public two-year institutions.

Thank you for your leadership and continued advocacy for higher education in Oklahoma.

Sincerely,

The NSANTI Presidents of the Oklahoma Association of Community Colleges



Carl Albert State College
President Jay Faulkner



Connors State College
President Ron Ramming



Eastern State College
President Randy Harp



Northeastern Oklahoma A&M College
President Kyle Stafford



Northern Oklahoma College
President Diana Morris



Redlands Community College
President Jena Marr



Seminole State College
President Lana Reynolds



Western State College
President Chad Wiginton