

THE PUBLIC AGENDA FOUNDATION



February 7, 1995

Honorable Carol Rascoe
Assistant to the President for Domestic Policy
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Carol:

I understand President Clinton will be in California next week to address the American Council on Education concerning his plans to make higher education more available. As you work to put the finishing touches on the President's remarks, I thought it would be helpful for you to see the attached report on higher education Public Agenda did a few years ago.

The Closing Gateway is a study Public Agenda conducted for The California Higher Education Policy Center in 1993. This study found the vast majority of Californians still believe a college education for a young person today is the gateway to a middle-class life. This belief, however, is coupled with the fear of an escalating cost that will allow only the well-off to be able to afford it. To keep higher education available to any qualified and motivated student the majority of Californians believe the state's public higher education system needs to be fundamentally overhauled.

While conducting this survey in California, we also talked with a sample of individuals nationwide and found those findings echoed those from California.

You may find of particular interest Section Four, Principles for Evaluating Solutions, which includes survey findings on options to pay for higher education. If you wish, I'll be happy to discuss the essentials of this study with you or a member of your staff.

Public Agenda will be releasing a follow-up to *The Closing Gateway* later this month and I'll of course share a copy as soon as one is available.

Sincerely,

Deborah Wadsworth
Executive Director

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THE CLOSING GATEWAY

A REPORT FROM

THE CALIFORNIA
HIGHER EDUCATION
POLICY CENTER



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