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May 12, 2025

To Whom It May Concern:

Keiser University and AdventHealth University are vital to East Orange County and the surrounding region because of the high-quality education opportunities they provide, and the critical workforce needs they help meet across multiple sectors, especially in healthcare. The East Orlando Chamber of Commerce strongly opposes the Florida House's proposed elimination of the Florida Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) Grant and urges its full reinstatement in the state budget.

The EASE Grant plays a vital role in supporting students at independent nonprofit institutions like Keiser University and AdventHealth University, enabling access to affordable education and directly contributing to the regional and statewide talent pipeline. The proposed cuts jeopardize this access and would severely impact on the ability of our local workforce to keep pace with the demands of employers in Central Florida.

The East Orlando Chamber of Commerce has proudly served East Orange County for over 75 years, representing businesses across a wide range of industries and sizes with a focus on economic growth and community development. A core pillar of the Chamber's Advocacy Advisory Council is talent supply and education. Supporting a diverse range of higher education institutions is essential to sustaining a strong, well-trained workforce in the region.

Keiser University has been a key partner in that mission. With nearly 50 years of service statewide and over 20 years in Central Florida, Keiser University has been a valued member of the East Orlando Chamber for approximately 10 years. Its staff have served on our Board of Directors, contributed as Ambassadors, hosted Chamber events, and actively participated in our programming. Chamber members have also served on Keiser's Advisory Board, strengthening the bond between business and education.

AdventHealth University plays an equally important role, particularly in addressing the ongoing healthcare workforce shortage in Central Florida. As a leading institution in training nurses, radiologic technologists, and other healthcare professionals, AdventHealth University provides direct talent support to regional healthcare systems, including many of our hospital members.

Students from both Keiser University and AdventHealth University engage in clinical placements and externships with Chamber member organizations and often transition into permanent roles within our local economy. As the healthcare industry and others face increasing demands for skilled labor, access to affordable education must remain a top priority.

EASE is an efficient and effective investment in Florida's future workforce. Every dollar invested in the EASE Grant returns \$3.83 to the state. While the Chamber supports Florida's public institutions, the EASE Grant ensures cost-effective graduation outcomes. For example, every \$1 million invested in Florida's public institutions yields 17 graduates, whereas the same investment at independent institutions produces 277 bachelor's degree graduates.

The East Orlando Chamber of Commerce stands in full support of both members Keiser University and AdventHealth University and strongly urges Florida lawmakers to preserve the EASE Grant in the state budget. Doing so ensures that students have a choice in their education, and our region continues to meet the growing demand for skilled workers.

I welcome the opportunity to discuss this matter further. Please contact me at 407-277-595 or [andrew@eocc.org](mailto:andrew@eocc.org).

Thank you for your continued support of our students, our institutions, and our workforce.

Sincerely,

Andrew Cole  
President/CEO

Presidential Circle



Trustees

