



American Council on Education
Office of the President

June 13, 2007

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Obey:

On behalf of the American Council on Education and the undersigned higher education associations, please accept our sincere gratitude for your decision to include language in the House Labor-HHS appropriations bill restricting the Department of Education's ability to unilaterally regulate accreditation in FY 2008.

As you know, the higher education community has been concerned about the direction the Department has been pursuing with respect to accreditation since the release of the Spellings Commission report in September 2006. This concern increased throughout the recently concluded negotiated rulemaking panel on accreditation, which notably failed to reach consensus on the Department's controversial proposals in this area. While colleges and universities wholeheartedly embrace the value of institution-driven accountability, we believe the Department's rigid, top-down, one-size-fits-all approach to accreditation would seriously undermine the historic and highly successful relationship between higher education and the federal government.

Your limitation language in the FY 2008 Labor-HHS appropriations bill is sensitive to both process and policy on accreditation. We applaud your leadership on this issue and commend the continued inclusion of your language in the FY 2008 Labor-HHS appropriations bill this year.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David Ward', is written in a cursive style.

David Ward
President

DW/mmm

On Behalf Of:

ACPA - College Student Educators International
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education
American Association of Colleges of Nursing
American Association of Community Colleges

Re: Obey Accreditation Letter

June 13, 2007

Page 2

American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Dental Association
American Dental Education Association
American Indian Higher Education Consortium
Association for Biblical Higher Education
Association of American Colleges and Universities
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of American Universities
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges
Association of Independent Colleges of Art & Design
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities
Association of Presbyterian Colleges and Universities
Association of Research Libraries
Association of Specialized and Professional Accreditors
Association of Theological Schools
College Board
Council for Advancement and Support of Education
Council for Higher Education Accreditation
Council for Opportunity in Education
Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges
EDUCAUSE
Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities
Lutheran Educational Conference of North America
National Association of College and University Business Officers
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Schools, Colleges, and Universities of The United Methodist Church
National Association of State Universities and Land-Grant Colleges
National Collegiate Athletic Association
University Continuing Education Association
Women's College Coalition