

February 23, 2015

Representative John Kline  
Chairman  
U.S. House Committee on Education  
and the Workforce  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Virginia Foxx  
Chairwoman  
Subcommittee on Higher Education and  
Workforce Training  
U.S. House Committee on Education  
and the Workforce  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Alcee Hastings  
United States House of Representatives  
2353 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Representative Matt Salmon  
United States House of Representatives  
2349 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Kline, Chairwoman Foxx, Representative Hastings and Representative Salmon:

We write in support of H.R. 970, the Supporting Academic Freedom through Regulatory Relief Act. Colleges and universities fully recognize the need for safeguarding public funds and for being fully accountable to the taxpayers who provide those funds. However, in recent years the sheer volume, ineffectiveness and cost of the regulations and related actions promulgated or proposed by the Department of Education have far exceeded what might reasonably be required for these purposes.

While we share many of the Department's stated goals, and have made repeated efforts to inform and improve their regulatory approaches, the agency has been unable or unwilling to address our concerns. Given their insistence on moving forward with these flawed approaches, congressional action is warranted.

Several of the regulations addressed in H.R. 970 have been so poorly crafted that they do (or would do) nothing to advance the goals they were intended to serve. They fail to achieve their intended outcomes, yet impose significant costs and burdens on institutions. We are alarmed that the two pending administrative actions under consideration by the Department -- the college ratings system and a federalized teacher preparation program accountability system-- will be similarly burdensome with no public benefit. Worse still, they have the potential to do considerable harm to many institutions and the students they serve.

We understand this bill will prevent further action by the Department on some of these regulations and administrative actions until Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education

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Act, and will permanently bar others. This is a necessary step to ensure that higher education issues are addressed in a thoughtful, comprehensive way with the full input of Congress and other stakeholders.

In the event that this bill requires a budgetary offset, we would strongly encourage the committee to look only for savings outside of the student aid programs in order to avoid harming students.

We thank you for your support of America's college and universities and the students they serve, and we look forward to working with you to advance this important legislation.

Sincerely,



Molly Corbett Broad  
President

MCB/ldw

On behalf of:

Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, Western Association of  
Schools and Colleges  
American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education  
American Association of Colleges of Nursing  
American Association of Community Colleges  
American Association of State Colleges and Universities  
American Council on Education  
American Dental Education Association  
American Indian Higher Education Consortium  
Association of American Medical Colleges  
Association of American Universities  
Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities  
Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities  
College and University Professional Association for Human Resources  
Commission on Institutions of Higher Education, New England Association of Schools and  
Colleges  
Council of Graduate Schools  
Council for Higher Education Accreditation  
Council of Independent Colleges  
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Middle States Commission on Higher Education  
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities  
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators  
Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities  
Senior College and University Commission, Western Association of  
Schools and Colleges  
Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges  
The Higher Learning Commission, North Central Association  
UNCF  
University Professional and Continuing Education Association