

April 1, 2011

The Honorable Harry Reid
Majority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20510-0001

RE: Oppose the Kline-Foxx Amendment to the FY 2011 Continuing Resolution

Dear Leader Reid:

Thank you for your leadership in making college affordable for more students, especially low-income students. Your past efforts to increase the maximum Pell grant amount, strengthen the federal student loan program, and enhance educational opportunities for members of the military and veterans have gone a long way to ensuring access to post-secondary education for all students. These steps are essential to reach the President's goal of having the highest college graduation rate in the world by 2020.

But, we do nothing for students or our nation if we just guarantee access to debt without a serious opportunity for college completion. The Department of Education's proposed gainful employment regulation recognizes that some current career education programs are so toxic that they doom students to a lifetime of debt burden and waste millions of precious taxpayer dollars.

The Kline-Foxx amendment to H.R. 1 would prohibit the Department of Education from doing the minimum needed to protect students and taxpayers from the most toxic choices and would allow the continued flow of federal dollars into programs that have been, at best, ineffective and, at worst, routinely leaving students much worse off than when they enrolled. Specifically, the amendment would eliminate funding to:

- Enforce existing regulations that ensure students receive the kind of basic consumer information they need to make an informed choice about a career education program; and
- Finalize or implement any gainful employment regulation to protect students and taxpayers from wasteful career education programs at any type of college.

We urge you not to agree to the Kline-Foxx amendment as a rider as you negotiate a fiscal year 2011 continuing funding resolution. The absence of regulation in the gainful employment area has left the most vulnerable students unprotected from unethical career education programs and has bilked taxpayers out of millions of precious dollars in Pell Grants and Stafford Loans. We must stop such abuses. The Department should be allowed to both finalize and enforce these critical regulations without delay.

Sincerely,

AFL-CIO	The Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights
American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers	League of United Latin American Citizens
American Association of University Professors	Legal Momentum (formerly the Women's Legal Defense and Education Fund)
American Association of University Women	National Association for Bilingual Education
American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees Local 3299	National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low-income clients)
American Federation of Teachers	National Consumers League
Americans for Financial Reform	National Council of La Raza
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance	National Education Association
Campaign for College Affordability	National Organization for Women
Campus Progress	Neighborhood Economic Development Advocacy Project
Center for Law and Social Policy	Pride at Work
Children's Defense Fund	Public Advocates Inc.
The Coalition of Labor Union Women	Public Citizen
Consumer Action	Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts
Consumers Union	Returning Veterans of America
Council for Opportunity in Education	Thurgood Marshall College Fund
Crittenton Women's Union	United States Hispanic Leadership Institute
Dēmos: A Network for Ideas and Action	U.S. PIRG
The Education Trust	United States Student Association
GLSEN	VetJobs
The Greenlining Institute	Young Invincibles
Hispanic Association of Colleges & Universities	
The Institute for College Access & Success and its Project on Student Debt	
Labor Council for Latin American Advancement	

cc: The Honorable Arne Duncan, Secretary of Education
The Honorable Jacob "Jack" Lew, Director, Office of Management and Budget
Melody Barnes, Director, Domestic Policy Council
Valerie Jarrett, Senior White House Advisor
Gene Sperling, Director, National Economic Council

Please note: This letter was updated on April 7, 2011 to include organizations that asked to sign the letter after it was submitted to Leader Reid on April 1, 2011.