

**Council for
Higher Education
Accreditation**

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Heritage University

July 12, 2013

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The Honorable John Kline
Chair, U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chair, U.S. House Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Alcee L. Hastings
Member, U.S. House of Representatives
2352 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chair Kline, Chair Foxx and Congressman Hastings:

The Council for Higher Education Accreditation (CHEA) strongly supports H.R. 2637, the Supporting Academic Freedom through Regulatory Relief Act introduced on July 10, 2013. The legislation's purpose – reducing the regulatory burden on higher education – is commendable. We particularly applaud the bill's intent to repeal regulations related to the definition of credit hour and state authorization.

CHEA has voiced concern about credit hour and state authorization regulations since they first were proposed by the U.S. Department of Education (USDE) in 2010. These regulations alter the traditional role of the federal government and its relationship with accreditation and with states.

Regulations creating a federal definition for a credit hour move USDE into an area heretofore reserved for academe. At their core, credit hour decisions are academic judgments. This is the work of academic faculty and administrators, not the federal government.

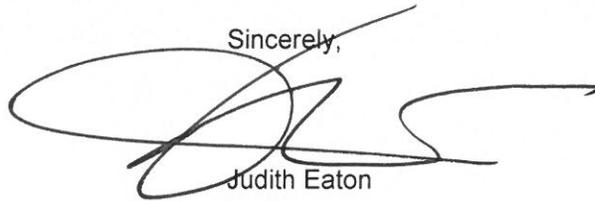
State authorization regulations place USDE in a position of authority over decisions concerning which institutions are authorized to operate in various states, upsetting the previous relationship between the federal government, states and accreditation.

John Kline, Virginia Foxx and Alcee Hastings
U.S House of Representatives
July 12, 2013
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CHEA has shared its views regarding the problems these regulations pose with USDE and Congress, including comments from CHEA to USDE in July, 2010, signing comments from the higher education community to USDE in August, 2010 and signing higher community letters to Education Secretary Arne Duncan in February and March, 2011 and to House Education and the Workforce Committee and Senate Health, Education Labor and Pensions Committee leaders in April, 2011. CHEA also strongly supported House legislation to repeal these regulatory provisions (H.R. 2117) and urged our 3,000 member colleges and universities to support this important bill.

It is our hope that H.R. 2637 will be quickly passed by the House and that a companion bill will be introduced and passed by the Senate. Thank you for introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Judith Eaton', written over the word 'Sincerely,'.

Judith Eaton
President