



February 27, 2012

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman, House Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee
1230 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx:

On behalf of State University of New York Empire State College (SUNY Empire State College) I am writing to thank you for sponsoring H.R. 2117, "Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education" which would repeal regulations put forward by the Department of Education regarding state authorization and credit hour.

The state authorization regulation put forward by the Department of Education reflects a significant intrusion into prerogatives properly reserved to the states. It has already led to an increase in costs that will ultimately have to be carried by students.

SUNY Empire State College was established in 1971 by the SUNY Board of Trustees and then-chancellor and future United States Commissioner of Education Ernest L. Boyer as a distinctive statewide SUNY institution focused on nontraditional teaching and learning, where college faculty mentors guide learners through designing an individual degree program within 11 broad areas.

Further, the college continues its 40-year commitment to valuing learning gained from life and work experience and has a clear process for assessing and awarding credit for college-level learning gained through experience.

SUNY Empire State College supports efforts aimed at curbing abuse and bringing greater integrity to the federal student aid programs. However, given the almost total lack of evidence of a problem in either the credit hour or state authorization context, we believe that these two regulations have led to increased costs and have altered the relationships between the federal government, states, accreditors and institutions of higher learning. In practice, these regulations have proved expensive and lead to limiting student access to quality higher education opportunities.

The State of New York was forward thinking when it established SUNY Empire State College and it is our hope that passage of HR 2117 will be a step in the right direction to correct these two regulations that hamper innovation.

Thank you for sponsoring H.R. 2117.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Alan R. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Alan R. Davis
President