

January 2, 2018

The Honorable Paul Ryan
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
H-107 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
S-230 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Schumer
S-221 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Congressional Leaders:

Over 235,000 students will be at risk of losing their access to education and completion of their degrees if Congress does not act to extend the time for those schools accredited by ACICS to seek new accreditation elsewhere. We ask that you take bipartisan action to legislatively extend the time for schools to achieve new accreditation as soon as possible.

This is not, and should not be, a partisan issue. When the Obama Department of Education announced their decision to revoke ACICS recognition, I was assured by the Department leadership this action was not meant to harm the schools or the students, and that every step would be taken to help schools make the transition. We now need everyone involved to make sure schools are given time to find new accreditors, and that accreditors are given time to conduct appropriate reviews.

We have recently reviewed the current status of every ACICS school seeking new accreditation. Based upon our analysis of the current state of their applications, no less than 155 schools serving over 235,000 students have not yet finalized such transition, despite investing thousands of dollars per school to do so.

Early in this process, a group of accreditors wrote to the Department making clear they would be unable to consider all the requests for new accreditation within the current timeline. The only way we can protect the 235,000 students attending these institutions is to give the schools and the accreditors more time. Unfortunately, this requires legislative action. We continue to work with the Congress to include such legislation in the Omnibus Appropriations Bill. But that legislation keeps being delayed.

We write to ask the Congress to either enact the Omnibus Appropriations Bill or separate and pass under suspension this simple extension of time. The Department cannot extend this time period without legislative action. Unless such action occurs, these students will be left on the street with debt and no degree because their schools lost accreditation. This will result in millions of dollars in new student requests for loan forgiveness. Students don't want loan

forgiveness, they want to finish their degrees and begin their careers! Government needs to take action to make that possible.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Gunderson". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Steve Gunderson
President & CEO

CC: The Honorable Thad Cochran
The Honorable Patrick Leahy
The Honorable Roy Blunt
The Honorable Patty Murray
The Honorable Lamar Alexander
The Honorable Virginia Foxx
The Honorable Brett Guthrie