

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 19, 2014

Stop the Obama Administration from Rating Colleges
COSPONSOR H.Res. 614

Dear Colleague:

Please join us in supporting student choice and the diversity and innovation of our nation's higher education community by cosponsoring H. Res. 614, a resolution expressing strong disagreement with the President's proposed college ratings system.

As you may know, the Department of Education is working to create a "college ratings system." This proposal was initially announced in August 2013 as part of President Obama's "Plan to Make College More Affordable." Though many of the details and ways in which a ratings system would be derived are still under deliberation, the original proposal suggested the rating would be based on measures such as percentage of students receiving Pell grants, average tuition, loan debt, graduation rates, graduate earnings, and advanced degrees, just to name a few. This ratings system is to be in place before the 2015 -2016 school year, which is rapidly approaching.

We are gravely concerned the proposed Postsecondary Institution Ratings System will ultimately result in reduced choice, innovation, and diversity within our nation's colleges and universities. Such a measure is reductionist in nature and filters out many benefits of a college education that graduates' earnings and student loan debt cannot measure; i.e. civic engagement, critical reasoning skills, and greater appreciation for arts and culture. Additionally, too many questions remain about both the accuracy of data used by the Department of Education and the Department's ability to track student transfers between institutions. A consequence of using imperfect data may be unintentionally penalizing the schools that educate underserved populations.

For these reasons and others, we have introduced H.Res. 614, a resolution "strongly supporting the quality and value of diversity and innovation in the Nation's higher education institutions, and strongly disagreeing with the President's proposal to create and administer a Postsecondary Institution Ratings System." This bipartisan resolution affirms both the autonomy of students and their families to choose schools based upon their own values as well as the need to spend taxpayer dollars, even those spent on financial aid, wisely.

Between the Sixth District of Virginia and the Seventh District of Massachusetts, we represent over 50 postsecondary institutions. We invite you to join us in protecting the diversity and innovation of those institutions as well as those in your district. To cosponsor H.Res. 614, please contact Lindsay Yates (Lindsay.Yates@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Goodlatte's office, or Andrew Eaton (Andrew.Eaton@mail.house.gov) in Congressman Capuano's office.

Sincerely,



Bob Goodlatte
Member of Congress



Mike Capuano
Member of Congress