

September 11, 2017

The Hon. Kevin Brady
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 LHOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Hon. Richard Neal
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
1139E LHOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Brady and Ranking Member Neal,

On behalf of the undersigned organizations and companies, we write in support of H.R. 795, the *Employer Participation in Student Loan Assistance Act* and urge Congress to include this important legislation in any upcoming tax package. This legislation would allow employers to provide tax-free student loan repayment assistance to employees. It expands the current Sec. 127 – employer provided education assistance – which already allows employers to provide tuition assistance, to also allow loan repayment assistance as an additional option. This would be an incredibly valuable choice and overall employee benefit.

Financing a college education is expensive, but loans, grants, and tax benefits help make college more affordable. Student debt can delay an individual's major life decisions and the nation suffers when this debt burden, in turn, hinders innovation. While the tax code has several incentives to help students and families afford tuition, there are few benefits that help students repay loans. When employees receive assistance to pay off their student loans, they have increased opportunities to buy a home, save for retirement, or start a new business. In turn, these contributions aid the overall health and growth of the U.S. economy.

Section 127 of the Internal Revenue Code is a popular benefit that enjoys bipartisan support and enables employers to voluntarily provide tax free education assistance to their employees. Under Sec. 127, employees are able to exclude from income up to \$5,250 per year in assistance for any type of educational course at the undergraduate, graduate or certificate level.

This same benefit should be expanded to employees who have already incurred student loan debt. Congressmen Rodney Davis of Illinois and Scott Peters of California have introduced H.R. 795, the *Employer Participation in Student Loan Assistance Act*. This bill would provide employers with the flexibility to offer employees assistance towards their student loans or to provide tuition assistance towards continuing education. By expanding Section 127 to include student loan repayment, employees could receive a tax-exempt benefit of up to \$5,250 per year by their employer to pay towards their student loan debt.

This benefit is an important tool for employers to attract and retain top talent in order to build a skilled workforce. Sec. 127 plays a critical role in maintaining U.S. competitiveness and could, if strengthened, become the premier employee benefit for tuition assistance and loan repayments among employers.

Due to the broad bipartisan support and nearly 100 cosponsors of H.R. 795, we urge Congress to include this bill in the upcoming tax reform package. Thank you for your assistance in maintaining and strengthening this critical tax benefit.

Sincerely,

128 Technology
Alabama Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
American Association of College Registrars
American Association of Community Colleges

American Association of State Colleges and Universities
American Association of University Professors
American Council on Education
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
American Society for Engineering Education
American Student Assistance
Arkansas' Independent Colleges and Universities
Associated General Contractors of America
Associated Students of Washington State University
Association of Big Ten Students:
 Illinois Student Government
 Indiana University Student Association
 University of Iowa Student Government
 University of Maryland Student Government Association
 University of Michigan Central Student Government
 Associated Students of Michigan State University
 Minnesota Student Association
 Association of Students of the University of Nebraska
 Northwestern Associated Student Government
 The Ohio State Undergraduate Student Government
 University Park Undergraduate Association
 Purdue Student Government
 Rutgers University Student Assembly
 Associated Students of Madison
Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Independent California Colleges and Universities
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in Massachusetts
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities in New Jersey
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Ohio
Association of Independent Colleges and Universities of Rhode Island
Association of Young Americans
Austin Chamber of Commerce
Big Stone Therapies
Blount Fine Foods
Boston University Student Government Association
Bright Horizons Family Solutions
Central Student Government, University of Michigan
ChowNow
College & University Professional Association for Human Resources
College Bound
CommonBond
Commonwealth Psychology Associates
Community College of Denver Student Government Association
Connecticut Council of Independent Colleges
Consortium of Universities of the Washington Metropolitan Area
Continuum Rehabilitation
Corporate Voices for Working Families
Corporate Wellness, Inc.
Council for Adult and Experiential Learning

Council of Graduate Schools
Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia
Digital Federal Credit Union
Dobler College Consulting
Dots, Inc.
Duke University
Edlink, LLC
Federation of Independent Illinois Colleges and Universities
First Choice Pediatrics
First Republic Bank
GDH Consulting
Georgia Foundation for Independent Colleges
Government Finance Officers Association
Gradfin
Gradifi
Guidance Gurus
Guidance Residential, LLC
Hartford Consortium for Higher Education
Hewlett-Packard
Illinois Student Government at the University of Illinois
Independent Colleges and Universities of Florida
Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri
Independent Colleges and Universities of Texas
Independent Colleges of Indiana
Independent Colleges of Washington
Indiana University Student Association
Information Technology Industry Council
Institute of Electric and Electronics Engineers
International Public Management Association for Human Resources
Iowa Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
Kansas Independent College Association
Kutztown University Student Government Board
Lorenz Clinic of Family Psychology
Maryland Independent College and University Association
MetroHartford Alliance
Michigan Independent Colleges and Universities
Minnesota Private College Council
Motus, LLC
National Association of Colleges and Universities Business Officers
National Association of Graduate Professional Students
National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
National Association of Independent Schools
National Council for Advanced Manufacturing
National Education Association
National Public Employer Labor Relations Association
National Tooling and Machining Association
Natixis Global Asset Management
New Hampshire College and University Council
New York University
North American Die Casting Association

North Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
Oklahoma Independent Colleges and Universities
Oregon Independent College Association
Peanut Butter, Inc.
Precision Machined Products Association
Purdue Student Government
Raytheon
Rochester Institute of Technology
San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce
Society for Human Resource Management
South Carolina Independent Colleges and Universities
Southern Illinois University Edwardsville, Student Government
Starbucks
Student Debt Crisis
Student Government Association, University of Maryland
Student Government Association, University of Alabama
Tennessee Independent College and University Association
The Associated Student Government, Northwestern University
The Associated Students, Michigan State University
The Association of Independent Kentucky Colleges and Universities
The Commission of Independent Colleges and Universities in New York
The Precision Metalforming Association
Training Solutions, Inc.
Tuition.io
Undergraduate Student Government at The Ohio State University
Undergraduate Student Government, University of Cincinnati
United Auto Workers
United Technologies Corporation
University Continuing Education Association
University of Iowa Student Government
University of Northern Iowa Student Government
University of Pennsylvania
Verizon
Ward and Smith, P.A.
WC Research, Inc.
Whitworth University
Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities
WorldatWork
Zmarketeers, Inc