



1307 New York Avenue, NW • Fifth Floor • Washington, DC 20005-4701
202.293.7070 • fax 202.296.5819 • aascu.org

February 6, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Education and Labor Committee
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Howard “Buck” McKeon
Ranking Member
Education and Labor Committee
U. S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Miller and Ranking Member McKeon:

On behalf of more than 400 member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU), I write to offer support for the “Maintenance of Effort” provision contained in H.R. 4137.

AASCU has a long and proud tradition of representing colleges and universities that provide affordable college access to millions of students, many of whom demonstrate significant financial need. College affordability is one of our biggest advocacy priorities, and we know that it has been one of your top priorities over the last several years as you have worked to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. We are pleased that this bill acknowledges the critical role that state appropriations play in the tuition levels of our nation’s public colleges. Financing our country’s higher education system is a partnership whereby investments and declines in investments from any partners affect the entire system. Federal legislation regarding college costs should recognize the interconnectedness of such a partnership.

While we understand that concerns have been raised regarding this provision, we believe the modification to the language that applies maintenance of effort to only the state’s operating appropriations for higher education is a positive change that will help stabilize the funding that most directly affects tuition levels at public institutions. In addition, we recognize that this provision is modeled after other maintenance of effort provisions in current law and is not precedent setting.

Thank you for your commitment to making college more affordable and accessible for our nation’s college students.

Sincerely,

Dr. Edward Elmendorf
Senior Vice President, Government Relations
American Association of State Colleges and Universities

cc: Members of the House Education & Labor Committee