



INTERNATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF NURSING, ST. KITTS
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February 6, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
House Education and Labor Committee
2181 Rayburn HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Miller:

As I am sure you are well aware, the United States is facing a growing health care crisis with the number of qualified nurses at an all time low despite the rapidly increasing demand. At present there is a shortage of approximately 186,000 nurses and the Department of Labor estimates that the number may exceed 1 million nurses in the next 7 years. As the shortage worsens, health care in the United States is directly impacted and continues to worsen.

I would like to express my strong support for the College Opportunity and Affordability Act (HR 4137). This bill includes numerous provisions which will provide greater access to higher education and help students afford escalating college costs. Additionally, I would like to applaud the provisions encouraging students to pursue a nursing degree.

As Chairman of the International University of Nursing (IUON), I strongly support the amendments which will allow foreign nursing students to be eligible for Title IV loans. US nursing schools are at a maximum capacity with nearly 6 out of every 7 qualified applicants are rejected. With the growing shortage of nurses in the US, it is only logical that we encourage more Americans to explore a nursing degree overseas.

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There are currently 180 students attending IUON, most relying heavily on financial aid to be able to attend school. Unfortunately, at present the only form of financial aid available to students at IUON is through private student loans which are credit based and very expensive. If Title IV funding is made available to IUON students, a significant number of qualified US citizens will be able to obtain a credible nursing education.

Again, I strongly support this bill and the nursing school provisions so that more students are afforded the opportunity receive a top quality nursing school education.

Thank you.

Robert Ross

Dr. Robert Ross
Chairman

Enclosure

RR/jlk

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