



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK
/ ALBANY, NY 12234

PRESIDENT OF THE UNIVERSITY
AND COMMISSIONER OF EDUCATION

July 29, 2008

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Howard "Buck" McKeon
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and Labor
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Edward "Ted" M. Kennedy
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education Labor
and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Michael B. Enzi
Ranking Member
Committee on Health, Education Labor
and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Miller, Chairman Kennedy, Ranking Member McKeon and Ranking Member Enzi:

On behalf of the New York State Board of Regents, I want to thank you for including in the Higher Education Act conference report an expansion of eligibility under current federal loan forgiveness programs to teachers in educational service agencies (ESAs). Leveling the playing field for teachers, whether they are employed in a "school" or in an "ESA," will help to ensure that wherever students learn, they will be taught by highly qualified and highly effective teachers.

While the new expansion will benefit states from coast to coast, it will be particularly helpful in New York where the majority of classes in our ESAs, or BOCES, are for students with disabilities and students enrolled in career and technical education classes – two areas where New York is experiencing teacher shortages.

We appreciate your attention to this critical issue and look forward to the loan forgiveness provisions becoming law.

Sincerely,

Richard P. Mills

cc: The Honorable Members of the New York Delegation