



May 15, 2013

The Honorable John Kline, Chairman  
The Honorable George Miller, Senior Democratic Member  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Committee on Education and the Workforce  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Senior Democratic Member Miller:

On behalf of Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC), we are writing to express our support for the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act (H.R. 1949). RAMC is a coalition of leaders from across the country who share the common belief that community colleges are one of America's primary solutions to building a strong, more competitive workforce and therefore, a strong middle class.

RAMC believes that the current Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) fails to provide the information necessary for institutions, policymakers and most importantly families and students to understand the complete picture of higher education opportunities and options—particularly as it relates to community colleges. Current data collected does not accurately take into account the role that community colleges play in educating part time and transfer students. Data reported to families, students and others needs to recognize the role and value that community colleges play in educating our nation's workforce.

While data collection and reporting needs to be made more useful, the Federal government must also balance the need to collect data with the burdens and costs for institutions of higher education in collecting this data. Additionally, paramount to all of these efforts should be ensuring the security of data and maintaining the privacy of individuals.

While we believe the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act has the potential to provide much needed information to Congress as the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act approaches, we hope that this is only the beginning of the conversation to improve data collection. The role of the Advisory Committee under the bill to provide recommendations on legislative, regulatory and other actions that can be taken to ensure we collect and safeguard the data for institutions and families alike is much needed.

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Thank you for moving forward with H.R. 1949. We look forward to working with you to ensure that this legislation and a reauthorized Higher Education Act strengthens higher education transparency and that data collection works for students, families, and intuitions of higher education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joe D. May". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "M".

Joe May  
Board Chair, Rebuilding America's Middle Class (RAMC)  
President, Louisiana Community & Technical College System

CC:  
Representative Virginia Foxx, Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training  
Representative Rubén Hinojosa, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training  
Representative Luke Messer