

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

September 2, 2015

The Honorable John Kline  
Chairman  
Education and the Workforce Committee  
2181 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott  
Ranking Member  
Education and the Workforce Committee  
2101 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Kline and Ranking Member Scott,

Originally known as the National Defense Student Loan program, the Federal Perkins Loan Program began 57 years ago and has been included in the Higher Education Act since its inception in 1965. Perkins is the nation's longest running student loan program. Over the decades, this program has enabled millions of students from low-income families across the country to pursue higher education. We respectfully urge the Committee on Education and the Workforce to work to reauthorize the Federal Perkins Loan Program before it expires at the end of the fiscal year on September 30, 2015.

Through Perkins, campuses provide subsidized, low-interest loans to assist deserving undergraduate and graduate students. These loans are made available through campus-based revolving funds established from a combination of federal and institutional contributions. Perkins Loans fill a critical gap that exists for many students after federal grants and Stafford loans are applied.

Due to the impending expiration of the program, the U.S. Department of Education has advised the over 1,500 participating public and private colleges and universities that they cannot issue new Perkins loans starting October 1, 2015 in the absence of congressional action. While students across the country are receiving acceptance letters, at the same time they being told there is no guarantee a Perkins loan will be available for them throughout their education.

As one of three campus-based student aid programs, Perkins loans provide necessary flexibility to colleges and universities, which can use Perkins loans in conjunction with other forms of financial assistance to help students afford the cost of higher education. Perkins loans also act as a lifeline when unforeseen disruptions, such as a parent's job loss or student's inability to work enough hours, jeopardize a student's ability to pay for college. Because they do not accrue interest while a student is in school and maintain a fixed five percent interest rate when repayment begins, Perkins loans often offer a much more affordable alternative to private student loans. Furthermore, the Perkins loan program encourages graduates to serve their country and communities by offering partial or full loan forgiveness to borrowers engaged in various types of public service.

In addition to harming thousands of students who may not have the means to afford college or would be forced to take out expensive private student loans, the expiration of this crucial

program would eliminate billions of dollars in student aid from the revolving funds that institutions use to disburse Perkins loans. These revolving funds are what make the Federal Perkins Loan Program self-sustaining, with student loan repayments paying for new loans. The continuation of the program would not cost the government any additional money but its elimination would cost participating colleges and universities millions.

We strongly encourage the Committee to reauthorize the longstanding Federal Perkins Loan Program, which is a great benefit to students, higher education, and our country as a whole.

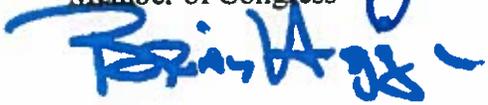
Sincerely,



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Member of Congress



Charles Rangel  
Member of Congress



Brian Higgins  
Member of Congress



Kathleen M. Rice  
Member of Congress



Yvette D. Clarke  
Member of Congress



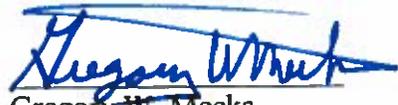
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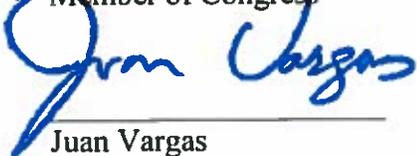
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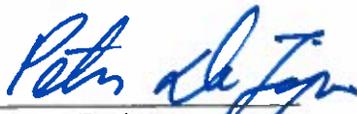
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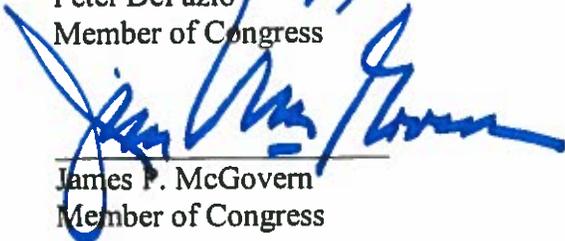
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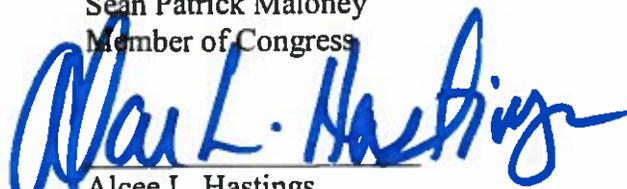
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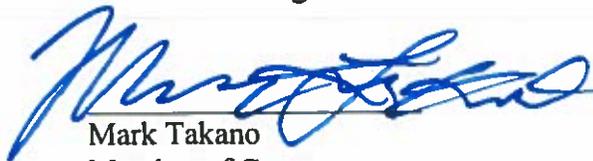
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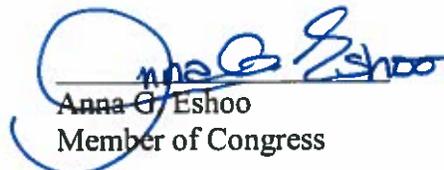
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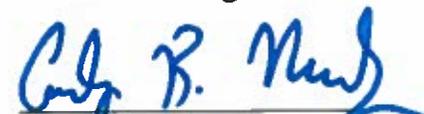
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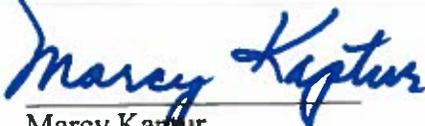
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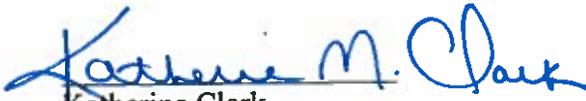
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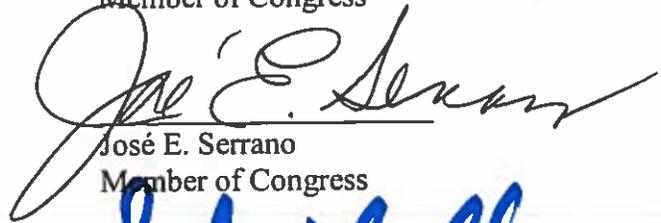
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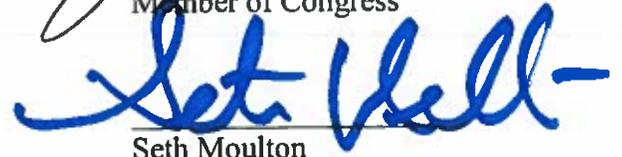
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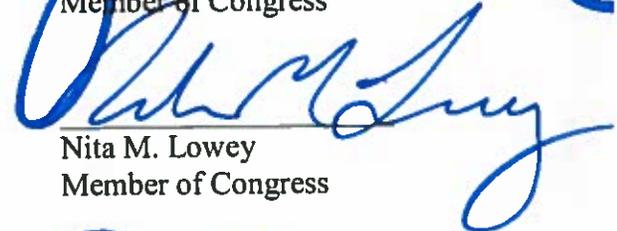
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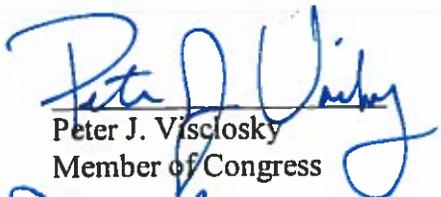
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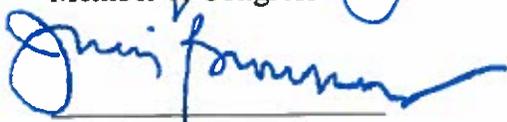
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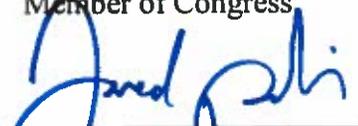
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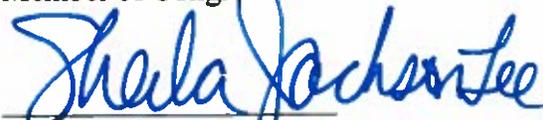
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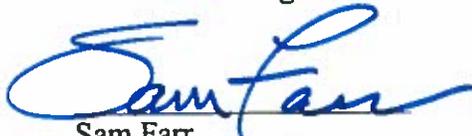
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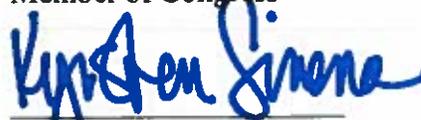
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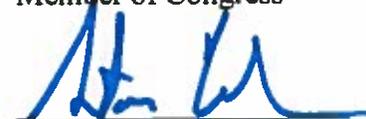
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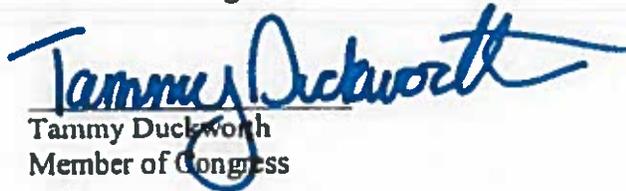
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David N. Cicilline  
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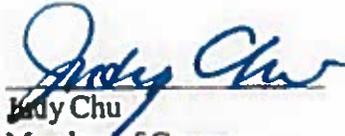
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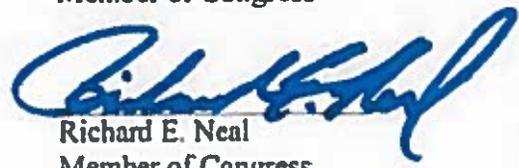
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