



March 6, 2017

Senator Mitch McConnell
Majority Leader Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-230, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Charles Schumer
Minority Leader
United States Senate
S-221, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Committee on Health Education Labor
and Pensions
United States Senate
428 Senate Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Patty Murray
Ranking Member
Committee on Health Education, Labor
and Pensions
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Leaders McConnell and Schumer, Chairman Alexander and Ranking Member Murray:

I write on behalf of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU)—representing public institutions of higher education that graduate about half of all teachers in the United States—in support of H.J. Resolution 58, a joint resolution disapproving of the Department of Education’s regulation affecting postsecondary teacher preparation programs (published at 81 Fed. Reg. 75494, October 31, 2016).

While this regulation is well intentioned, it requires programs to comply with certain state rating criteria that are not evidence-based, would be exceedingly difficult and costly to implement and are inconsistent with the bipartisan Congressional policy on teacher preparation as expressed in the Every Student Succeeds Act. As you are well aware, that landmark legislation explicitly prohibits the Department of Education from issuing a federal mandate on the states’ teacher evaluation systems. Foisting an onerous federally-mandated state rating system for teacher preparation programs is an unacceptable political intrusion into matters academic.

We are committed to improving our teacher preparation programs and placing the best teachers in our nation’s classrooms. With the repeal of the teacher preparation regulations, we can engage in a robust discussion around the best policies and practices for preparing America’s teachers. We stand ready to work with you as the

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Committee crafts legislation on this topic in this Congress through the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act.

We look forward to continuing to work with you on this important issue.

With warm regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Muriel A. Howard". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping initial "M".

Muriel A. Howard, PH.D.
President