

June 11, 2015

The Honorable Marco Rubio
284 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner
475 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Ron Wyden
221 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Rubio, Warner, and Wyden:

The undersigned organizations — a coalition that supports use of data to ensure that education and training programs are effectively helping all Americans succeed — thank you for introducing the Student Right to Know Before You Go Act (S. 1195).

We support the bill's focus on providing useful and reliable information, including data on student debt, graduation rates, and employment outcomes after completion. Students and families are facing rising tuition costs and low college completion rates, among other challenges. This bill would harness data already collected by states and educational institutions to assist them in making good choices as they select schools and programs, and help educators set benchmarks for continuous improvement. We also appreciate the bill's provisions regarding capture of more complete and accurate data through a federal student record system. Finally, we support the bill's comprehensive privacy protections, which would safeguard student data and build trust in the utility of data for improving education.

There is growing support for improving the federal government's postsecondary data infrastructure and making this information more usable. For example, your efforts align with many of the policy recommendations recently put forward by more than two dozen organizations in the Postsecondary Data Collaborative.

With the recent introduction of a similar bill in the House of Representatives, we are hopeful that S. 1195 will spur Congressional action on strengthening postsecondary data and inform reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. For further discussion, please contact Rachel Zinn, Workforce Data Quality Campaign Director

(rachelz@workforcedqc.org, 202-223-8355). Thank you for advancing this important issue.

Sincerely,

Association for Career and Technical Education (ACTE)
Association for Institutional Research
Association of Public & Land-grant Universities (APLU)
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Equal Justice Works
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
National Association of State Directors of Career Technical Education Consortium
National Skills Coalition
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
Workforce Data Quality Campaign (WDQC)
Young Invincibles

CC:

The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Patty Murray
Ranking Member of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee
154 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510