



USU

Coalition of
Urban Serving Universities

101 Constitution Avenue, NW, Suite 600 West, Washington, DC 20001

Arizona State University

California State University –
10 Member Schools

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–
City College

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University

Georgia State University

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Denver

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Chicago

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University of Missouri –
Kansas City

University of New Mexico

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University of Texas – Austin

Virginia Commonwealth
University

Wichita State University

November 13, 2007

The Honorable George Miller
Chairman
Committee on Education and Labor
United States House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Rubén Hinojosa
Chairman
Subcommittee on Higher Education, Lifelong Learning, and Competitiveness
United States House of Representatives
2181 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Miller and Hinojosa:

On behalf of the Coalition of Urban Serving Universities (USU), I am writing to thank you for including a provision that supports community engagement efforts by urban serving universities in the “The College Opportunity and Affordability Act of 2007” (H.R. 4137). As members of the National Association of State Universities and Land Grant Colleges (NASULGC), USU shares the concerns expressed by NASULGC President Peter McPherson in his recent letter regarding certain provisions of H.R. 4137 and hopes the higher education community can work with you to address these other issues. Nonetheless, USU applauds the inclusion of this urban-focused language.

USU is a national consortium of public urban research universities, led by member presidents. The coalition recognizes that our nation is being economically transformed and increasingly reliant upon urban centers. Currently 85 percent of all jobs in the United States are located in the urban core and fringe areas; and by 2030 86 percent of all Americans will live in cities.

USU was formed to enable urban universities to coordinate efforts to sustain the quality of urban life and America’s competitiveness in the global economy. Through research-driven activities, strategic initiatives and collaborative community action, USU and its member institutions seek to

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deepen investments in urban communities throughout the country by concentrating on three initiatives: Human Capital, Strong Communities, and Urban Health. Specifically, USU works to preserve America's strength and future by delivering 21st century educational opportunities to inner-city students, creating economic opportunities to strengthen and invest in local urban economies and leading innovation in urban health reform.

We are extremely pleased that H.R. 4137 revitalizes Title VII Part C of the Higher Education Act (HEA) to focus on issues related to USU's initiatives. Urban areas face many challenges unique to cities and urban universities are distinctly positioned with a broad range of skills and resources – intellectual, human, technological, and social – to engage in these issues. This federal investment in urban universities shall scale up innovative efforts and provide a greater national impact on strengthening metropolitan prosperity.

Again, we thank you for your vision and leadership in advancing the importance of this issue. We look forward to working with you on ensuring this provision is included in the final version of the HEA reauthorization bill passed by the 110th Congress. Through this and similar endeavors to tie urban universities with their communities, we can continue to bolster our nation's economic competitiveness and make our cities a better place to live.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nancy L. Zimpher". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "N" and a long, sweeping underline.

Nancy L. Zimpher
Chair, Coalition of Urban Serving Universities
President, University of Cincinnati