

November 6, 2019

The Honorable Lamar Alexander  
Chairman  
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor  
and Pensions  
428 Dirksen Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Doug Jones  
U.S. Senate  
326 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chairman Alexander and Sen. Jones:

The National Council of Higher Education Resources (NCHER), representing state, nonprofit, and private organizations that assist students, parents, borrowers, and families pay for the costs of postsecondary education, is pleased to support S. 2667, the “FAFSA Simplification Act,” which would streamline the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). This important bill would expand college access and success for millions of low-income and first-generation students across the country and demonstrates the importance of bipartisanship cooperation in improving the federal financial aid system.

For more than 50 years, NCHER members have offered face-to-face and individualized financial education and counseling services to assist students and their families in making smart education decisions and understanding, managing, and paying for the costs of a postsecondary education. As part of their public service missions, our members counsel students and families on how best to navigate the financial aid process, how to avoid overborrowing, the importance of managing student loan debt, and budgeting and personal finance management skills. Our members carry out comprehensive FAFSA completion services to students and families across the country, which include holding events in states and local communities where experts assist parents in completing the FAFSA on-site and working with area high schools to provide help to graduating seniors. We know that the length and complexity of the current FAFSA - totaling more than 10 pages and 108 questions – has caused several low- and moderate-income families to give up and lose access to federal financial aid. S. 2667 would simplify and streamline the financial aid application process by reducing the number of questions on the FAFSA to roughly 18-30 questions focused on family income and by eliminating several irrelevant and unnecessary questions. At the same time, it would continue to provide enough information to states so that they may award their own aid without the need to create separate processes. This bill is a win-win for students, their families, schools, and states.

NCHER commends you for your leadership in ensuring that the federal financial aid system is simpler and fairer for students and families. Our organization and membership are pleased to endorse S. 2667 and to assist in its passage in the 116th Congress.

Sincerely,



James P. Bergeron  
President