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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives

June 14, 2012

Arkansas Legislative Council
Subcommittee on Higher Education
Representative Johnnie Roebuck, Co-Chair

Dear Representative Roebuck,

I am pleased to see that the Arkansas Legislative Council's Subcommittee on Higher Education is meeting today to discuss the important issue of access to veterans' benefits by for-profit universities and the rising student loan debt incurred by students attending these universities in Arkansas.

Unfortunately, I am unable to attend the meeting due to a previously scheduled dedication at City Hall in Lake Village, Arkansas. However, I wanted to personally send my appreciation to the Subcommittee for raising awareness of this issue.

The current federal law, which prohibits for-profit colleges from receiving more than 90 percent of their revenue from federal sources, has unfortunately created an environment where some for-profit colleges and universities have recruited and targeted service members because veterans' benefits are treated as nonfederal funds.

It is essential that we support our veterans and their families during and after their tours of duty. I am hopeful that in the coming months, Congress will work to modify this rule to protect the brave men and women who have sacrificed so much defending our nation.

I am also hopeful that Members of Congress can come together to pass legislation to prevent student loan interest rates from doubling on July 1st. As you may know, in 2007 I voted for and helped pass H.R. 2669, the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, which originally cut student loan interest rates in half, and I support maintaining these low interest rates for struggling students trying to realize the American dream of earning a college education. I will continue to do all I can to ensure these rates do not increase on July 1st, but it must be done responsibly and without partisan games.

Our continued economic recovery is directly tied to the education of our children and this increase would raise the overall cost of education for American students and families when many are still struggling.

For America to continue its economic recovery and its ability to compete in today's global economy, it is more important than ever that our nation's young people have a quality education and I believe every American student deserves the opportunity to attend college as affordably as possible.

Once again, thank you again for holding this important meeting and bringing awareness to this issue.

Sincerely,

Mike Ross
Member of Congress

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