



One Dupont Circle, NW, Suite 430 • Washington, DC 20036-1173
Telephone (202) 223-3791 • Fax (202) 331-7157 • www.cgsnet.org

July 13, 2007

Senator Edward Kennedy
Chairman
Health, Education, Labor & Pensions Committee
United States Senate
615 Hart Office Building
Washington, DC 20510-6300

Dear Senator Kennedy,

On behalf of the Council of Graduate Schools, I would like to express our support for two pieces of legislation: the “Higher Education Amendments of 2007” (S. 1642) and the “Higher Education Access Act of 2007” (S. 1762).

CGS applauds the effort to reauthorize higher education programs through S. 1642. We are particularly grateful that several graduate fellowship programs, including the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need and the Jacob K. Javits Fellowships would be reauthorized for the next five years.

We are very supportive of the efforts to expand participation by underrepresented minority groups in graduate education. One new program contained in the bill that could be of great value in expanding the domestic pool of graduate students is the new “Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans” program, which would offer competitive grants to Hispanic-Serving Institutions. Also, the bill contains a new “Patsy Mink Fellowship Program” to assist highly qualified minorities and women to acquire the doctoral degree and to enter the professoriate. We look forward to working with you to ensure the success of these new graduate education programs.

The second bill, S. 1762, aims to increase access to higher education for both undergraduate and graduate students. As you know, the burden of debt facing college graduates can deter them from seeking advanced degrees. This is a critical issue as the need for highly-skilled talent continues to grow in the 21st century global economy.

We are heartened by several provisions in the college access bill which will be beneficial to graduate students including income-based loan repayment, loan forgiveness for some public service employees, and loan deferment.

Thank you for your work on this important legislation. U.S. graduate education is a vital component of maintaining America’s economic leadership in the 21st century global economy. Through your efforts we will continue to provide opportunities to educate and train the next generation of leaders at the best graduate schools in the world – right here at home.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Debra W. Stewart". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Debra W. Stewart

AFFILIATES

Conference
of Southern
Graduate Schools

Northeastern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Midwestern
Association
of Graduate Schools

Western
Association
of Graduate Schools