



## NEWS RELEASE

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## CONTACT:

Gail Rayos  
407.244.3685 or 407.744.2169  
[grayos@wraggcasas.com](mailto:grayos@wraggcasas.com)

## Florida Leaders Join Together To Oppose Federal Higher Education Regulation

*Hospitality, education, healthcare and business advocacy groups  
support effort to protect Florida students*

Tallahassee, FL — More than 100 Florida leaders from the business, education and non-profit communities – along with associations representing Florida’s multi-billion dollar hospitality industry, nearly 1,000 private schools and colleges, Florida hospitals and various other corporations – today called on the U.S. Department of Education to drop its proposed Gainful Employment regulation, citing the rule as harmful to the interests of students and employers alike.

While never addressing education quality, the regulation would however harm students by closing programs and denying them opportunities for skills attainment. It would harm Florida businesses by shrinking the pool of available talent. More than 300,000 students in the state choose to attend private career colleges and many of them rely on these very programs that are in jeopardy to gain the skills necessary to make positive changes in their lives through education and employment.

Florida Association of Postsecondary Schools and Colleges (FAPSC) Executive Director Curtis Austin said the signatories to a letter to U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan show that a wide cross-section of Floridians finds the Gainful Employment rule deeply troubling. Associated Industries of Florida, the voice of Florida business since 1920, along with the Florida Hospital Association and the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association, are among the signing organizations. To view the letter, go to [fapsc.org/Letter to Secretary Duncan](http://fapsc.org/Letter to Secretary Duncan).

“We believe the rule will dramatically limit both the opportunities of many Florida students to access postsecondary education and the ability of Florida employers to obtain workers with job-ready skills and abilities,” the letter to U.S. Education Secretary Duncan notes.

Career colleges play a key role in the Florida economy:

- In the retirement-attractive Sunshine State, the U.S. Census reports 17 percent of residents are 65 years old or older, among the largest consumers of health care services. More than 60 percent of healthcare graduates in Florida are educated at career schools.
- TechAmerica Foundation ranks Florida No. 5 for high-tech employment, No. 3 for high-tech establishments and No. 1 in the nation for computer training employment. Florida career colleges produce over 60 percent of in-state information technology graduates.
- Florida hosts almost 95 million tourists a year who are served by the hospitality industry. Tourism represents 23 percent of Florida’s sales tax revenue and includes nearly 1.1 million employees, according to the Office of Florida Governor Rick Scott. Career colleges educate 83 percent of Florida’s culinary arts graduates.

“In advancing the interests of students in Florida and across the nation, we ask the Department to choose a path that preserves choice, expands opportunity and leads to greater economic prosperity for all,” the letter to Duncan concludes.

Separately, U.S. House of Representatives Committee on Education and Workforce Chairman John Kline, R-MN, and U.S. Rep. Alcee Hastings, D-Miramar, of the Florida delegation, have joined with 34 other members of Congress in a bipartisan letter expressing their opposition to the gainful employment regulation. Florida members of Congress joining U.S. Rep. Hastings in signing the letter are U.S. Rep. Theodore Deutch, D-Boca Raton; U.S. Rep. Alan Grayson, D-Orlando; U.S. Rep. Lois Frankel, D-West Palm Beach; U.S. Rep. Joe Garcia, D-Miami, and U.S. Rep. Patrick Murphy, D-Jupiter. The letter urges the U.S. House Committee on Appropriations and the Subcommittee on Labor, Health, and Human Services and Education to block the troubling Gainful Employment regulation as soon as possible. To view the letter, go to [fapsc.org/Letter - Prohibit Gainful Employment](http://fapsc.org/Letter-Prohibit-Gainful-Employment).

“Job creation and the Florida economy are growing in part because skills are available to drive businesses forward,” said Austin. “The Gainful Employment regulation unfairly sanctions career colleges for circumstances beyond their control. In doing so, the rule threatens to damage a system that isn’t broken, harming jobs, families and communities in the process.”

For more information about the effort to Protect Florida Students and the proposed Gainful Employment regulation, go to [www.StopBadRegs.com](http://www.StopBadRegs.com).

FAPSC is a voluntary, 501 (c)6 membership organization representing career colleges in Florida. FAPSC conducts education programs, hosts an annual meeting, and represents the interests of its member institutions before the Florida Legislature and regulatory bodies. FAPSC is located at 150 South Monroe St., Ste. 303, Tallahassee, Fla. 32301. For more information, go to [www.fapsc.org](http://www.fapsc.org).

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