# **Sample Letter to Representatives**

**HEA – House**

**This is a sample letter template you can use to contact your representative to urge them to support students and institutions by opposing the PROSPER Act, the HEA reauthorization bill passed out of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce. Complete the letter by filling in the information specific to you and providing an example or two of how students you work with benefit from state-level inclusivity investments in higher education to personalize your letter. You do not need to name specific students or indicate the institution you work at. You may also make other changes to the text in the template, to add or remove specific information and tailor your letter to focus on the issues most important to you.**

[date]

Dear [title] [last name]:

As your constituent living in [your city], I am writing today to ask you to support college students in [your state] and across the country by voting against H.R. 4508, the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success and Prosperity Through Educational Reform (PROSPER) Act. The PROSPER Act would make higher education more expensive for millions of students and families while also making significant changes in federal higher education policy without a clear understanding of the likely consequences.

As a student affairs professional, I see first-hand how federal programs support students. Student affairs is a critical component of the higher education experience, collaborating with colleagues across institutions of higher education to offer students valuable learning opportunities, meaningful social engagements, and safe and inclusive environments.

[Insert personal statement or story.]

On behalf of our students, I urge you to oppose the PROSPER Act because it is bad for students. By eliminating the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) program, which serves 1.5 million students annually; eliminating the in-school interest subsidy for six million low-income student borrowers; and reducing the amount families can borrow to pay for college, this legislation would immediately increase the cost of college. While the bill greatly expands the number of programs and providers able to access federal funds, it simultaneously relaxes the requirements that keep unscrupulous actors out of the system by eliminating the gainful employment and borrower defense regulations. This combination of greatly expanded eligibility with lax oversight will necessarily lead to large increases in fraud and abuse in the Title IV federal aid programs. The PROSPER Act eliminates or cuts funding to programs such as TRIO that have been proven to support low-income students, prepare students in high demand fields such as teaching, and support the strengthening of institutions supporting first-generation, low-income students.

Instead of the PROSPER Act, I urge you to work with your Congressional colleagues on the Committee on Education and the Workforce to draft and support bipartisan legislation to reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA) that will provide student aid and institutional support for today’s students. Specifically, I ask you to protect student aid by maintaining in-school loan interest subsidies, preserving the Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG) and Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) programs, and expanding and increasing the Pell Grant program. Additionally, I ask you to ensure that federal regulations to protect our nation’s investment in higher education, such as the gainful employment and borrower defense regulations, are maintained and enforced by the Department of Education. Finally, I ask you to pay specific attention to crafting legislation that will work to close equity gaps for historically marginalized populations in our country by maintaining or increasing institutional support for minority serving institutions under Titles III and IV and sustaining our investments in low-income students through the TRIO programs.

The future of our nation’s knowledge economy relies on a college-educated workforce. I am relying on you to do what is right both for [your states]’s students and our nation as a whole.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. I look forward to hearing from you about your plans to support our students and institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,

[name]

[address, including zip code]