

October 30, 2017

Chairman Lamar Alexander
Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor & Pensions
Washington, D.C. 20510

Chairwoman Virginia Foxx
House Committee on Education and the Workforce
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Alexander and Chairwoman Foxx,

We write to urge you to preserve the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program. PSLF allows borrowers who work full-time at public service jobs while making on-time payments on their student loans to earn forgiveness after ten years. President George W. Bush signed this bipartisan program into law on September 27, 2007 as part of the College Cost Reduction and Access Act. Since then, we have seen its positive effects in local communities firsthand.

PSLF makes it financially feasible for talented law students to commit to careers serving the public. We have seen many of our most qualified students – those who would previously have foregone their desire to serve the public in order to take higher paying private sector jobs just to repay their loans – instead enter into a diverse array of long-term careers. These include advocating for veterans, children and the elderly, as well as serving as prosecutors and as Judge Advocate General's Corps (JAG) attorneys.

In turn, employers have told us that PSLF has transformed their workforces. Not only has it resulted in an influx of talent, it has enabled them to retain these talented young attorneys, saving costs on training and recruitment and increasing their efficiency and efficacy.

Of course, the impact of PSLF is felt far beyond the legal field. You will find similar stories of the successful recruitment and retention of top talent in diverse fields ranging from the military, police and first responders to social workers, librarians and teachers. There is no doubt that the future leaders of our communities will be made up of PSLF program participants.

It is particularly important to preserve PSLF for the Millennial generation. The careers of millions of young people were set back by the Great Recession, causing them to delay moving out on their own, buying homes and getting married. Those early reductions in earning power will dramatically decrease the amount many of them will earn over the course of their careers and be able to save for retirement. The opportunity to earn PSLF is exactly the bootstrap that Millennials who choose public service need to become economically self-sufficient adults and retire without needing to rely on government assistance.

We recognize, of course, that PSLF costs money, but we have seen that it is a worthwhile investment. The benefits to our communities far outweigh the costs. And the dedicated young people who work hard, pay their debts on time, and serve their communities embody uniquely

American values of public service and sacrifice. We ask you to help them continue on the path of public service and contributing in their local communities by preserving PSLF as it exists today.

Sincerely,

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