

# Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

May 14, 2019

Adler University  
President Raymond Crossman  
17 North Dearborn Street  
Chicago, Illinois 60602

Dear President,

We are writing to inquire about your institution's efforts to comply with the student voter registration provision in Title IV of the Higher Education Act (HEA), which mandates that higher education institutions make a "good-faith effort" to distribute voter registration forms to students.

In recent years, our state has been a leader in efforts to improve the voter registration process by adopting reforms like same-day registration and automatic voter registration. These reforms strengthen access to the ballot for all Illinoisans. However, there can still be unique challenges and questions related to student voter registration.

In the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, Senator Durbin and Congressman Krishnamoorthi led the Help Students Vote Act, which aims to improve access to voting for millions of college students across the country. This legislation would amend Title IV of the HEA to require institutions to distribute voter registration forms to each student at least twice a year and no less than 30 days before voter registration deadlines for state and federal elections. The legislation would also require institutions to share information regarding state registration deadlines, residency requirements, voter identification, and absentee voting, as well as designate a staff member or office as the "Campus Vote Coordinator" to answer student questions about voter registration. Finally, the bill would authorize grants to institutions that go above and beyond the statutory requirements to promote civic and political engagement on campus, and establish enforcement actions to ensure compliance for bad actors.

Importantly, the majority of these provisions were included in the For the People Act (H.R. 1 in the House and S. 949 in the Senate), which passed the U.S. House of Representatives in March 2019.

As we continue our federal legislative efforts to strengthen voting access for students, including by reintroducing the Help Students Vote Act in the 116<sup>th</sup> Congress, we write to gather information from Illinois colleges and universities about current efforts to comply with or exceed the existing Title IV requirements. We would appreciate answers to the following questions:

1. What steps has your institution taken to make a good faith effort to distribute voter registration forms to students, as required by the HEA?
2. What other steps has your institution taken to inform students about voter registration and voting procedures on campus?
3. How frequently do you communicate with students about voter registration and voting procedures on campus?

As Congress discusses reauthorizing the Higher Education Act for the first time in more than a decade, we look forward to working together with Illinois institutions of higher education to strengthen nonpartisan civic engagement. Insight from colleges and universities is important in this process, and we welcome your feedback.

The right to vote is part of the bedrock of American democracy, and we are committed to taking steps to strengthen access to the ballot for all Americans, including college students.

Please provide written responses to [durbin\\_education@durbin.senate.gov](mailto:durbin_education@durbin.senate.gov). Thank you for your prompt attention and insight into this matter as we prepare to reintroduce this important legislation.

Sincerely,

		
RICHARD J. DURBIN United States Senator	TAMMY DUCKWORTH United States Senator	RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHY Member of Congress