



PARTNERSHIP FOR PUBLIC SERVICE

OURPUBLICSERVICE.ORG

1100 New York Ave NW Suite 200 East Washington DC 20005

December 6, 2011

The Honorable Carl Levin
Chairman
U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John McCain
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Howard “Buck” McKeon
Chairman
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member
U.S. House of Representatives
Committee on Armed Services
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Levin and McCain, and Representatives McKeon and Smith:

We write to express our strong support for Sec. 1116 “Federal Internship Programs” under Title XI – Civilian Personnel Matters in the House-passed *National Defense Authorization Act*, H.R. 1540. As you work to resolve differences between the House and Senate bills, we urge you to retain this language, which would make it easier for our students to find federal internships and improve the quality of internship programs across government.

As leaders of colleges and universities, we are keenly aware of the value of the student internship experience. Internships provide our students with the opportunity to develop their skills in a professional environment, and give employers a chance to build a pipeline of future talent. This important provision will ensure that federal agencies offer quality internships and use them to identify potential candidates for future employment.

An analysis of data from the Office of Personnel Management by the Partnership for Public Service found that there were more than 78,000 student interns across government in FY2010, and nearly 40 percent of those interns worked at the Department of Defense.¹ Some agencies

¹ Numbers based on Partnership for Public Service analysis of the Enterprise Human Resources Integration-Statistical Data Mart (EHRI-SDM) provided by the Office of Personnel Management.

provide meaningful work experiences and developmental opportunities for their interns; however, others undervalue their internship programs and the quality of the programs suffer as a result, often deterring students from pursuing future government service. The language in Sec. 1116 of H.R. 1540 will help agencies capture key data on where they are recruiting interns, how they are utilizing them, and how interns view the quality of their experience based on exit interviews and surveys. This data will enable agencies to determine where programs improvements are needed and will hold them accountable for making changes.

This provision will also make it easier for students to find internships in government. OPM will now be required to centrally post information about student opportunities and agencies will have to post the name of an internship coordinator. Section 1116 also requires OPM to maintain a database of individuals completing federal internships, making it easier for agencies to identify high-performing interns who are seeking full-time employment.

Given limited agency resources, agencies must be strategic about how they utilize students to accomplish work today and build critical talent pipelines for the future. We believe this provision moves us closer to this goal.

We thank you in advance for considering our views and we encourage you to retain this language to improve federal internship programs in the final version of the *National Defense Authorization Act*.

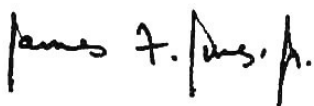
Sincerely,



John Sexton
President, New York University



Steven H. Kaplan
President, University of New Haven



James F. Jones, Jr.
President, Trinity College



James M. Reynolds
Interim President, Wilmington College



Selma Botman
President, University of Southern Maine



Richard F. Giese
President, University of Mount Union

Electronic signature not available

E. Gordon Gee
President, The Ohio State University

Electronic signature not available

Julia M. McNamara
President, Albertus Magnus College

Electronic signature not available

Tom V. Chema
President, Hiram College

Electronic signature not available

Kevin P. Reilly
President, University of Wisconsin System



Nancy Cantor
Chancellor and President, Syracuse University

Electronic signature not available

Elsa Nuñez
President, Eastern Connecticut State University



Joel Bloom
Interim President, New Jersey Institute of
Technology

Electronic signature not available

Rebecca Chopp
President, Swarthmore College

Electronic signature not available

Lee C. Bollinger
President, Columbia University

Electronic signature not available

Eugene G. Sander
President, University of Arizona