



Associated Equipment Distributors
Washington Office
1201 15th Street, NW
Suite 220
Washington, DC 20005

June 20, 2018

The Honorable Virginia Foxx
Chairwoman
House Education & the Workforce Committee
2176 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairwoman Foxx:

I am writing on behalf of Associated Equipment Distributors (AED) to urge lawmakers from both sides of the aisle to support the Promoting Real Opportunity, Success and Prosperity through Education Reform (PROSPER) Act (H.R. 4508), legislation that reforms, modernizes and reauthorizes the Higher Education Act.

AED is the international trade association representing companies involved in the sale, rental, servicing and manufacturing of construction, mining, farm, energy, forestry and industrial equipment. Our more than 500 member companies, which are predominantly small-medium-sized, family-owned businesses, have over 3,000 locations throughout North America, employing 40,000 people and accounting for \$15 billion in annual sales of construction equipment and related supplies.

AED members have identified the technician shortage as the greatest strategic challenge for the construction equipment industry. In fact, according to a 2016 report by the College of William & Mary, the industry's technician shortage costs AED members approximately \$2.4 billion per year in lost revenue and economic opportunity.

The PROSPER Act will help prepare students for in-demand jobs in the construction equipment industry. Several of the PROSPER Act's reforms will be particularly beneficial as AED members attempt to fill well-paying, in-demand jobs at equipment dealerships, including:

- Allowing students to use financial aid, such as Pell Grants, for shorter-term programs that will assist them in entering the workforce more efficiently and better prepared.
- Expanding the Federal Work-Study program to facilitate greater private sector involvement and opportunities for students.
- Permitting institutions to use more resources to locate and develop work-based learning jobs, including apprenticeships, and encouraging partnerships between colleges and industry to expand earn-and-learn opportunities.

These improvements in the legislation will more effectively invest federal dollars to help our nation's students acquire the skills that they need and employers – including AED members – demand.

We commend you for your steadfast leadership in addressing the nation's workforce challenges. AED looks forward to continuing to work with you on this issue and we encourage your colleagues to support the PROSPER Act.

Sincerely,

Brian P. McGuire
President & CEO