



Statement: Donna Gurnett, President and CEO of the Association of Proprietary Colleges Testifies Before the Office of Postsecondary Education, U.S. Department of Education Addressing the Gainful Employment Rule and the Borrower Defense to Repayment regulations

Gainful Employment

“While our membership has always agreed with the Gainful Employment Rule’s stated aim – to ensure that students enrolled in certain higher education programs receive a quality education that adequately prepares them for gainful employment – we have questioned the relevance of the metrics the regulation relies on to assess program value and have argued that they are unrealistic and politically biased.

“Quality programs with strong academics, exceptional graduation rates, and enviable job placement outcomes should be celebrated. These well-established academic outcomes should be metrics the Department relies on. Moreover, if we are to truly protect all students, the rule must apply to all programs at all institutions, not just the proprietary sector of higher education.

“Given that the Higher Education Act is currently going through reauthorization, we respectfully ask our elected representatives in Congress to help develop a system of disclosures (or accountability measures) to ensure students and taxpayers are protected and educational quality is preserved.

Borrower Defense to Repayment

“Members of New York’s Association of Proprietary Colleges (APC) are committed to ensuring all students have the opportunity to receive a quality, affordable education. What’s more, our membership believes strongly that students who have been unfairly treated by other institutions of higher education should have just recourse.

“In the early 1970s, the state recognized the ability of New York’s proprietary colleges to educate non-traditional students and granted select institutions degree-granting authority. Since that time, the state has empowered each of its four sectors of higher education, comprised of SUNY, CUNY private not-for-profit and proprietary colleges, to increase college access and ensure degree completion. All sectors, including New York’s proprietary colleges, are carefully regulated by the state Board of Regents to ensure academic integrity.

“Members of APC are proud of their students and the sectors long-standing record of achievement in New York. The membership looks forward to working with policymakers to ensure all students are granted the opportunity to succeed.”