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The Honorable Senator Tim Kaine

United States Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Kaine:

On behalf of NAF, I want to thank you for our leadership in championing federally funded workforce opportunities in the career and technical education space through the Jumpstart Our Businesses by Supporting Students (JOBS) Act.

NAF is a national education non-profit that brings schools and businesses together to transform the high school experience and to better align education and workforce opportunities through career focused academies. Our academies are integrated into existing public high schools and put students – especially students who may lack access - on a path to achieving their full potential. Through integrating our industry partners in our academy design, NAF also ensures businesses have the skilled and diverse workforce pipeline they need to strengthen their local communities and compete globally.

We are committed to ensuring educators, local education agencies, and workforce development boards work seamlessly together to support college and career readiness programs for our nation's high school students. Given our experience of nearly 45 years, we uniquely understand the need for a wide array of workforce programs and opportunities to peak a student's interest in a potential career pathway. Short-term programs that provide students with a necessary credential or experience that will jumpstart their careers and expand their employment opportunities is one such way to provide students an opportunity to reach their full potential. NAF supports providing students funding for these programs through Pell Grants to connect students to the next steps in their career journeys. We support the JOBS Act as providing students the opportunity to gain training and/or credentials that will help them continue their career interests is critical to supporting robust connections between education and workforce systems.

As you and your colleagues continue to push for the broadening scope of Pell Grants, NAF encourages the extension of Pell Grant eligibility to cover dual enrollment courses. Dual enrollment provides students the chance to earn high school and college credits at the same time, reducing college tuition expenses and encouraging more students to pursue post-secondary education opportunities. Dual enrollment programs have been shown to be an effective tool and students should be able to maintain their full 12 semesters of Pell Grant eligibility when they officially start their post-secondary experience.

NAF appreciates your leadership in introducing and continually championing the JOBS Act and stands ready to assist in any way we can. Please feel free to reach out to Jennifer Pautz, Assistant Vice President of Policy & Advocacy, at jpautz@naf.org.

Sincerely,

Lisa Dughi
CEO | NAF