Date

The Honorable Paul Ryan The Honorable Nancy Pelosi

Speaker Minority Leader

U.S. House of Representatives U.S. House of Representatives

**RE: H.R. 4508: PROSPER Act – OPPOSE**

Dear Speaker Ryan and Minority Leader Pelosi:

On behalf of XXX, which represents California’s 72 community college districts, I write to you with significant concerns regarding H.R. 4508, also known as the PROSPER Act. While we appreciate the effort to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and some elements of the bill will be beneficial to our students, the net result of H.R. 4508 will be a reduction in student access, success and equity. Our main concerns are:

**Substantial Increase Liability for Unearned Title IV Funds**

The bill would substantially increase the amount of unearned Title IV grant aid our colleges are liable for when a student receives federal financial aid such as a Pell Grant but withdraws from a class. As open access institutions, community colleges serve populations that often are forced to reduce their course load due to work, familial or other emergencies. While we strongly believe that colleges should take steps to ensure tax payer funds are used responsibly, PROSPER will place an additional burden on our already thinly resourced financial aid offices.

**Elimination of Title III-A: Strengthening Institutions Program**

Title III-A is a competitive institutional aid programs that supports colleges that have few resources, serve minority populations or are located in rural areas. The elimination of this program will restrict the ability of our colleges to make continued programmatic investments that improve student access, success or equity. While supporters of PROSPER claim that this program was eliminated to increase funding for apprenticeship programs, this does not compensate for the loss of resources for institutional aid.

**Reduction of Financial Aid Resources for Students**

With the goal of simplifying and streamlining financial aid programs, PROSPER eliminates many important financial aid programs that enable our students to attend school, regardless of financial need. While the Community College League of California (the League) supports efforts to simplify the federal financial aid system, PROSPER proposes to do it in a manner that will result in a reduction of available resources to your students. Specifically, it proposes to eliminate:

* Supplemental Educational Propitiating Grants (SEOG).
* In-school interest subsides for low income federal student loan recipients.
* Time based and public services loan forgiveness programs.

I thank you for your consideration of our position on this matter. Please do not hesitate to contact me at XXX if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

CC: Members of California Congressional Delegation