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Sen. Baldwin: Leads bipartisan letter to HELP Committee calling for immediate action to save Perkins Loan Program

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – U.S. Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Rob Portman (R-OH), Bob Casey (D-PA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) today wrote to leaders of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) Committee urging them to immediately act to save the Perkins Loan Program before it expires this Saturday, September 30th.

In the letter to HELP Committee Chairman Lamar Alexander (R-TN) and Ranking Member Patty Murray (D-WA), the Perkins Loan Program Extension Act lead cosponsors urge for the committee to take up and pass legislation to extend this popular and effective campus-based financial aid program.

“We strongly support the Perkins Loan Program and write to urge the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee to act on its extension expeditiously and allow the full Senate to swiftly follow suit,” the Senators wrote. “We urge you to take up and pass the Perkins Loan Program Extension Act without delay. We thank you for your consideration and stand ready to work with you to advance this important legislation.”

Unless Congress acts, approximately 1,500 colleges and universities across the country will not be able to make these low-interest loans, leaving approximately 700,000 students without access to an important source of financial aid. In

Wisconsin, the program provides more than 23,000 low-income students with more than $57 million in aid.

Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Al Franken (D-MN), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Maggie Hassan (D-NH), Ron Johnson (R-WI), Jack Reed (D-RI), Charles Schumer (D-NY) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) have also cosponsored the legislation. U.S. Representatives Mark Pocan (D-WI) and Elise Stefanik (R-NY) introduced companion legislation in the House that has gained over 220 cosponsors.

A copy of the letter is available here.

An online version of this release is available here.