



ASSOCIATION OF AMERICAN
UNIVERSITIES

ASSOCIATION OF
PUBLIC AND
LAND-GRANT
UNIVERSITIES



September 29, 2009

The Honorable Daniel Inouye
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable David Obey
Chairman
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Thad Cochran
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Lewis
Ranking Member
Committee on Appropriations
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairmen Inouye and Obey and Ranking Members Cochran and Lewis:

The Association of American Universities (AAU) and the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities (APLU), whose combined memberships include most of the major public and private research universities in the United States, write to express our concerns about Senate Amendment 1371, an amendment to the FY2010 Department of Homeland Security Appropriations bill.

This amendment would require federal contractors to verify employment eligibility for “all individuals hired during the term of the contract by the contractor to perform employment duties in the United States and all individuals assigned by the contractor to perform work within the United States under the contract.” Unfortunately, this amendment significantly expands the verification requirements for all employers, including universities, that contract with the federal government. Given that many AAU and APLU universities are the largest employers in our local communities and states, to verify the employment eligibility of all new employees hired during the term of the contract to perform work in the United States, regardless of whether or not they are associated with the federal contract, would pose both a financial and administrative burden for our member institutions. In this regard, we respectfully request that members of the conference committee not include this amendment in the final Department of Homeland Security appropriations bill.

As both educators and employers, we certainly appreciate the importance of having a workable and efficient electronic employment verification system, and we stand ready to work with Members of Congress and their staff to develop such a system. In addition, please know that the university community is in the process of implementing the FAR rule on federal contractors and that we are committed to ensuring that those in our employ are legally authorized to work.

Sincerely,

Robert M. Berdahl
President
Association of American Universities

Peter McPherson
President
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities