

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 22, 2014

The Honorable Arne Duncan  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Education  
400 Maryland Avenue, SW  
Washington, DC 20202-0008

Dear Secretary Duncan,

I appreciate your ongoing efforts to ensure that students at colleges and universities across America are receiving a diverse and highly qualified education. I believe that we must do all that we can to ensure that a diverse education remains a reality for students.

I am writing to raise some concerns that have been brought to my attention by constituents in my state regarding the Department's administration of Title VI funds as authorized by the Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) of 2008. Concerns have been raised with me about the potential misuse of federal dollars for regional studies programs. More specifically, these concerns relate to an alleged lack of diversity and a limited scope of Middle Eastern study programs. During the 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, Congress required that programs receiving Title VI funding were to "reflect diverse perspectives and a wide range of views and generate debate on world regions and international affairs..."

I'm inquiring to find out more information about the Department's efforts to promote educational diversity within programs at institutions of higher education. What is your Department doing to account whether or not a program is in compliance with the aforementioned provision? Additionally, what actions does the Department pursue to ensure that these programs maintain academic integrity?

I look forward your response.

Sincerely,



Barbara A. Mikulski  
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin  
United States Senator