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Congress of the United States
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EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE

April 27, 2016

The Honorable Jeh Johnson
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Nebraska Avenue Complex
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Johnson:

I was greatly disturbed by recent news reports regarding The College Board's passive approach to preventing and addressing cheating on the SAT test abroad. Last month, Reuters published two articles on the widespread practice of strategic cheating on the SAT by test preparation centers in Asia. These preparation companies use a variety of methods to fraudulently obtain and share individual test questions, answers, or even entire tests. Even so, the College Board has pushed forward with administering the test even when it was known that tests had been compromised.

As many institutions of higher education continue to use the SAT and other standardized tests as part of their admissions criteria, I am concerned that under-qualified students are being admitted to U.S. schools under false pretenses.

As you know, any institution desiring to admit foreign students must be certified under the Student and Exchange Visitor Program (SEVP), which allows the institution to issue Form I-20, "Certificate of Eligibility for Nonimmigrant Student Status".

As the process for international students who wish to study in the United States requires that a prospective student already be admitted to an American institution before they can apply for a student visa, these institutions then, in reality, work in partnership with the Department of Homeland Security to ensure that only the best and the brightest are permitted into the United States. Once they are accepted, the school issues Form I-20 to the student, who is then able to apply for a student visa.

The United States hosts more international students than any other country in the world with approximately 1.2 million students. With such a generous foreign student system, it is important that we take every effort to ensure its integrity. As it stands, certain foreign students could fraudulently gain the upper-hand in college admissions by high test scores due to being prepared

by these dishonest test-prep centers, thus limiting the options of those students who took the test honestly.

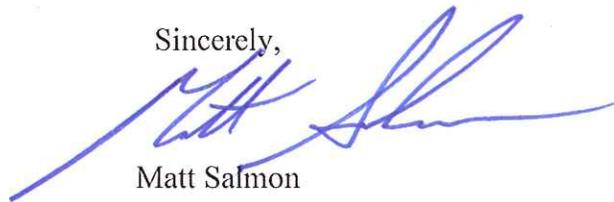
As a member of the House Education and the Workforce Committee, and as Chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, I am greatly concerned about the ramifications of this cheating on the integrity of our student visa program and the quality of our higher education system.

Therefore, I respectfully request that you provide answers to the following questions:

- How many institutions continue to rely on SAT scores in their admissions process?
- Does DHS have any estimates on how many students may have entered the U.S. with faulty test scores?
- What measures is DHS taking to encourage and incentivize institutions to maintain high standards regarding admissions criteria for foreign students?
- How can Congress offer assistance to strengthen the student visa system to ensure that the most-qualified and best-prepared students gain admission?

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. I look forward to hearing from you on the best ways we can work together to foster integrity in our immigration and education systems.

Sincerely,



Matt Salmon
Member of Congress