

United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510-1304

June 1, 2018

Illinois Board of Higher Education  
c/o The Honorable Tom Cross, Chairman  
1 N. Old State Capitol Plaza  
Suite 333  
Springfield, IL 62701

Dear Chairman Cross and Board Members:

I write today to share with you a letter Senator Sherrod Brown and I recently sent to U.S. Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos expressing concerns about the proposed transfer of Adtalem Global Education's DeVry University and Keller Graduate School of Management to California-based Cogswell Education. As the Board considers the change in ownership at its June 5 meeting, I hope it will act in the best interest of Illinois students.

This transaction raises a number of red flags that could spell disaster for Illinois students and should be further investigated and closely scrutinized by the Board, including:

1. Adtalem's history of misconduct and pending borrower defense claims;
2. Cogswell Education's lack of experience running large-scale educational operations;
3. Uncertainty about Cogswell College's current administration and academic management;
4. Links between Cogswell College's "Board of Trustees" and predatory for-profit colleges including DeVry and Corinthian;
5. WASC Senior College and University Commission's current placement of Cogswell College on "Warning" for "factors affecting academic quality";
6. Cogswell's current unwillingness to agree to uphold Adtalem's "Student Commitments" for current and future students; and
7. Loss of transparency as a result of publicly-traded institutions becoming private entities.

In addition, the Board should consider whether Illinois is the appropriate venue for primary state approval and ongoing oversight given Cogswell Education is located in California.

Given the evidence, I have serious doubts that approving Cogswell Education to operate DeVry University and Keller Graduate School of Management in Illinois is in the best interest of our students. If the Board approves the transaction despite the warning signs, it must include clear protections for students.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to continuing to work with you to ensure Illinois students are well served by institutions of higher education.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Dick Durbin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Dick" and last name "Durbin" clearly distinguishable.

Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

Enclosure

cc: Dr. Al Bowman, Executive Director