

Sample Letter

An Act Establishing a Student Tuition Recovery Fund

S164 – Sponsor: Senator Jason Lewis (Democrat - Fifth Middlesex)

H3807 – Sponsor: Representative Jennifer Benson (Democrat - 37th Middlesex)

My name is **[Insert Your Name]** and I work at **[Insert School Name and Address]**. I am writing to express concern about An Act Establishing A Student Tuition Recovery Fund (S164 and H3807).

Our school offers **[insert description of school programs and number of student or anything you feel is pertinent]**.

Our students are our number one priority. Our students often receive extra support from our career counselors in order to succeed, graduate and move on to rewarding careers in their chosen fields.

We believe that all students should be protected. However, we are opposed to the Student Tuition Recovery Fund because this legislation would create a redundant system, that would increase the cost of education to those who can least afford it.

In Massachusetts, there is a misconception that private career schools require that students pay upfront, in cash, for the full cost of an academic program – this is not the case. At most schools, students pay once per term, or even on a monthly or weekly basis. The full tuition amount is never at risk, just the amount a school has not earned.

Moreover, private career schools already protect students with the purchase of a Surety Bond through the Office of the State Auditor (OSA). The amount of the bond is determined by OSA, and is designed to reflect the highest amount of unearned tuition that a school would have over the course of a year. The bond provides the maximum amount that would need to be refunded to students if a school closed.

The Student Tuition Recovery Fund would also add unnecessary expenses to schools. Private career schools are already paying fees to the Division of Professional Development (DPL) and these fees have increased significantly. In the past few years, schools have paid 61% more to renew their license and 98% more to license admissions staff.

While we are troubled about the immediate costs, we are particularly concerned about the provision to allow the attorney general to add additional assessments even after the fund reaches its maximum amount of \$5,000,000. Additionally, with all due respect to the Massachusetts Legislature, there is no guarantee that the money collected from private career schools would not be put into the General Fund.

In the last five years, some 60% of the state's career schools have been forced to close and the Student Tuition Recovery Fund will surely force other schools to close.

We respectfully ask that you vote again the Student Tuition Recovery Fund.

Thank you for considering my request.