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AND WORKFORCE
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PRESIDENT & CEO

Joshua Bolten
Business Roundtable

October 31, 2019

The Honorable Danny Davis
U.S. House of Representatives
2159 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Jim Banks
U.S. House of Representatives
1713 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Barbara Lee
U.S. House of Representatives
2470 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable French Hill
U.S. House of Representatives
1533 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Cedric Richmond
U.S. House of Representatives
506 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Davis, Banks, Lee, Hill and Richmond:

On behalf of nearly 200 CEO members of Business Roundtable, I am writing to express support for your bipartisan effort to reverse the current ban on incarcerated individuals having access to Pell Grants. This goal would be accomplished through H.R. 2168, the Restoring Education and Learning (REAL) Act of 2019.

This legislation recognizes that a vast majority of incarcerated adults will re-enter their communities needing to find employment. At the same time, many of these same individuals lack the skills necessary to participate in the workforce upon their re-entry. Your legislation removes a major obstacle facing many of these individuals who are seeking to gain these skills and find a new path forward in life.

There is strong evidence this strategy works. A U.S. Department of Education pilot program, which involved over 10,000 inmates, demonstrated that the combined earnings of formerly incarcerated individuals provided access to Pell Grants increased by \$45 million during just the first year after leaving prison. Given these results, we are pleased to see that the Department is extending its Second Chance Pell Experimental Sites initiative.

Restoring Pell eligibility for incarcerated individuals not only helps individuals find employment and remain out of prison but can also help meet the growing demand for skilled labor facing many of our companies across the country.

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We applaud your bipartisan effort to address this issue and look forward to working with you to ensure passage of the REAL Act.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Joshua Bolten". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "J" and a flourish at the end.

Joshua Bolten
President & CEO
Business Roundtable

C: Members of the House Committee on Education and Labor