President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

January 26, 2011

Dear Mr. President,

On behalf of the institutions and organizations listed below, NAFSA: Association of International Educators thanks and congratulates you for expanding opportunities for U.S. students to study abroad by changing the current regulations on academic travel to Cuba. Study abroad opportunities provide students with a powerful educational experience and contribute greatly to U.S. strategies for engagement in the world. As you know, they have also historically been a successful tool in building relations between nations. With these new regulations, students across the country will again be able to study in Cuba, learn about the rich history and culture there, and begin to make the connections necessary for developing mutual understanding between our nations.

According to the latest data available, only about 250 U.S. students studied abroad in Cuba in the 2008-2009 academic year compared to more than 2,100 students who were able to study there only five years earlier. With the steps you are currently taking to amend the current restrictions on academic travel to Cuba, our institutions can begin to take steps to offer more opportunities for students to study abroad in Cuba. These programs will open the door for students across the United States to have the opportunity to study abroad in a country whose evolution will directly impact our own.

Sincerely,

American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers
Academic Programs International
Alliance for International Educational and Cultural Exchange
American Institute for Foreign Study
American Sociological Association
American University
Augsburg College
Bellarmine University
Center for International Policy
CIEE: Council on International Educational Exchange
Colleges of the Fenway
Columbia University
Cuban American Alliance Education Fund
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Duke University
Emporia State University
Endicott College
Fund for Reconciliation and Development
HACC-Central Pennsylvania’s Community College
J Perez Associates, Inc.
Kansas State University
Lane Community College
Lehigh University
Linfield College
Michigan State University
NAFSA: Association of International Educators
North Carolina State University
Northcentral Technical College
Northern Arizona University
Northern Illinois University
Occidental College
Pacific Lutheran University
Penn State University
Pittsburg State University
Rice University
Riverside Community College
Saint Louis University
Santa Monica College
SIT Graduate Institute
Social Science Research Council
SUNY Oswego
The Council of National Resource Center Directors
The Ohio State University
The University of Toledo
Troy University
Tulane University
University of Dayton
University of Delaware
University of Illinois
University of Minnesota
University of Wisconsin-Whitewater
University of Wisconsin-Madison
US Women and Cuba Collaboration
Utah State University
Virginia Commonwealth University
Viterbo University
Wesleyan University
Whitworth University