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November 28, 2017

The Honorable Kevin Brady
Chairman
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Orrin G. Hatch
Chairman
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Richard E. Neal
Ranking Member
House Committee on Ways and Means
1102 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Ron Wyden
Ranking Member
Senate Committee on Finance
219 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairmen Brady and Hatch and Ranking Members Neal and Wyden:

The American Bar Association, representing over 400,000 members including over 122,000 in law school or recently graduated, has policy specifically supporting the student loan interest tax deduction. Law students are directly affected by the student loan interest deduction. As principals involved with the Tax Cuts and Jobs Act, you are familiar with the popularity of the student loan interest deduction.

Of particular interest to the American Bar Association is the powerful financial disincentive for law students to enter the important function of public service in our society. The deduction of interest on law school loans helps recent graduates to accept lower-paying, public-service jobs that they might not otherwise be able to afford.

The cost of higher education in the United States has steadily increased each year while the relative availability of financial assistance in the form of grants and scholarships has decreased. Consequently, many students cannot afford higher education without borrowing substantial amounts of money, often hundreds of thousands of dollars.

The rising costs of obtaining college and graduate education result in a widening of the chasm between rich and poor. As lower-income families face growing difficulty paying for college and graduate school, college education may soon become a luxury that only the wealthy can afford. Recognizing the problem, in his 1992 State of the Union speech, President Bush stated, "It's time to allow families to deduct the interest they pay on student loans."

Ultimately, we ask you to adopt the Senate position on the student loan interest deduction and retain the deduction in the final Tax Cuts and Jobs Act.

Sincerely,



Thomas M. Susman

cc: Hon. Steven T. Mnuchin, Secretary, Department of the Treasury
David J. Kautter, Assistant Secretary Tax Policy, Department of the Treasury
David J. Kautter, Acting Commissioner, Internal Revenue Service
William M. Paul, Acting Chief Counsel, Internal Revenue Service