



WORKING DRAFT

2008 Federal Goals

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA) Issues

California's community colleges rely on Federal student financial assistance to ensure that all students have equal access. Sustaining adequate funding for low-income students is critical to the continued success of California's economy, as well as the long-term benefit to the individual student. The cuts in student Federal financial aid account for nearly one-third of the total amount of cuts in the 2005 Federal Deficit Reduction Act, dramatically impacting students in California. The California Legislative Analyst estimates an impact of \$1 billion - \$1.5 billion reduction in Federal student financial aid in the state over five years.

- **Remove: Elimination of Tuition Sensitivity Issue**
- Increase the maximum Pell Grant Award from \$4,050 to **(remove \$4,500 and insert \$6,000)**.
- Provide access for community college students to year-round Pell Grants.
- Include part-time students in the Academic Competitiveness Grant (ACG) program.
- Provide ACG for non-degree students (currently limited to degree students in regulations without adequate authority to do so).
- Maximize funding for the Title III-A Strengthening Institutions program and for the Title V Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSI) program. There are 252 HSIs nationwide, of which 74 are in California.
- Oppose "single definition" as a descriptive for "institution of higher education" in the HEA.

Reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act Issues

Career development is an ongoing process throughout the contemporary workforce. Community colleges are the largest and most efficient training provider and should be the focus of Federal investment in workforce and economic development.

- Increase the ability to share data among public and private agencies, as it is critical for purposes of curriculum design, as well as accountability.
- Modify eligibility requirements in a manner that encourages greater participation in the Federal workforce development system.
- Eliminate current provisions that authorize governors to divert funds from partner programs to pay for One-Stop Center infrastructure costs.
- **Oppose third party testing in OVAE regulations.**



Social Security Issues

The Federal government has established special rules for Social Security benefits that disadvantage certain public employees, including community college employees that participate in the California State Teachers Retirement System (CalSTRS). These include both the government pension offset and windfall elimination provisions. In the 108th Congress, two measures containing the repeal died at the end of session in their committees of origin and subsequent legislation has been stymied by the prohibitive costs of the measure, estimated @ \$52 billion over 10 years. Even so, repeal would benefit some of the approximately 60,000 full and part-time teachers at the 109 campuses of the California Community Colleges system and an additional four states in which educators are not covered by Social Security.

- Support legislation (S. 206 Feinstein) that would repeal the Social Security's Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision.

DREAM Act

REMOVE: Issue to be spearheaded by the CC League and local campuses due to state political complications. This legislation was reintroduced by Senator Richard Durbin of Illinois on October 23, 2007 and is pending in the Senate.

HOPE Scholarship

- Broaden the definition of eligible expenses for the Hope Scholarship tax credits to include textbooks, educational expenses and other supplies.

Affordability Issues

College costs grew 40 percent between 2001 and 2005, leaving many students with no choice but to take on massive amounts of debt in order to get a degree. The typical student graduates from college with \$17,500 in Federal college loan debt alone – and many more are forced to rely on credit cards to help pay for college. The most recent College Board report reveals **at public two-year institutions:** tuition and fees average \$2,361, a \$95 or 4.2 percent increase. The average full-time student in this sector receives about \$2,040 in grants and tax benefits, lowering the average tuition and fees to a net price of about \$320. Campaign for America's Future also shows that declining family incomes and rising college tuition costs are putting college further out of reach for families across the country. Both of these reports show that the skyrocketing costs of college continue to gouge the wallets of students and working families. Students are graduating with bigger college loan debts than ever before, and many can't afford to go to college at all. These rising costs, coupled with



stagnating family incomes and dwindling financial aid, have led to a serious crisis – one that hits low- and moderate-income students especially hard.

- Support S. 945 Durbin which focuses on reduction in textbook costs.
- Promote increases in the Income Protection Allowance (IPA).
- Promote increases in campus-based aid.
- Promote increase funding for work-study.

Student Bill of Rights (Remove, as issue has diminished with change of Congressional leadership)

In an effort to curtail “liberal bias” in the classroom, some in Congress are pushing for the adoption of an “Academic Bill of Rights.” The College Access and Opportunity Act, passed by the House in March and under consideration in the Senate, attempts to deny Federal funding to institutions - even private ones - that refuse to comply with the bill's limitations on speech.

- Oppose legislative proposals of this nature across the board.

Reauthorization of GI Bill

In California, 12,000 of the 14,000 vets are attending community colleges, and statistics show few will ever attend or much less graduate from 4-year schools. All CCC receive the VA Reporting Fees from the Federal Government. There is a degree of standardization within the CCC's, however, there are no CCC standards for how veterans are treated or processed. Additionally, active duty service members, while on terminal leave, must wait to receive their DD-214 with the official discharge date. If they attend college during this time, prior to that date, they are penalized by receiving only tuition & fees while their MGIB is charged for a full month of benefits at the active duty rate. For example, Benefit: \$1075, CCC T&F: \$255 = a loss of about \$800 per month for full-time students. Many veterans lose money for 1 ¼ months. Active duty personnel who have paid into the MGIB should be allowed to use their benefits at the MGIB rate? To use one month of benefits for tuition & fees is punitive at the CCC's, where the vets have their best options for pursuing an education before transfer to a 4-year institution.

It is reported in Congress that as many suicides have now occurred among Vietnam veterans as were killed in the Vietnam War (58,000). Brain Trauma Injuries and Post Traumatic Stress Syndrome are at historic levels among those returning from Iraq. Currently, plans are being developed in the CA Troops to College Initiative to house mental health programs for veterans and current service members and their families on community college campuses in CA and funding may be provided in this measure.



- Support new funding for community colleges in reauthorization, as largest majority of returning troops will be enrolling in two-year colleges.
- Support H.R. 327 Filner, which directs the Secretary for Veterans Affairs to develop and implement a program to help prevent suicide among veterans.

TANF/CalWORKs Issues

Revisions to the Interim Final Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) regulations were released by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services in June 2006 and will enable TANF recipients and former recipients to receive postsecondary education and training that will allow them to advance to higher-skilled jobs. The Federal regulations are far more restrictive than expected, limiting education and training opportunities for CalWORKs students and creating a huge reporting burden for the colleges.

- Support Transfer Opportunities for CalWORKs Students: Allow postsecondary education that leads to a baccalaureate or advanced degree to count as vocational educational training. The interim final rule released in June prohibits states from counting postsecondary education that leads to a baccalaureate or advanced degree as vocational educational training.
- Allow supervised and unsupervised hours of study time for CalWORKs students in community college vocational programs to count towards their hours of work participation. The preamble of the interim final rule prohibits states from counting unsupervised study time as participation in vocational educational training and education directly related to employment. The preamble language only allows for the hours of “monitored study sessions” to be counted.
- Allow Basic Skills Education to Count as Part of Vocational Educational Training for Longer Than a “Limited Duration.” The preamble of the interim final rule indicates that basic skills education may be counted as part of vocational educational training only if it is “a necessary and regular part of that training” and is “of limited duration.”
- Allow English as a Second Language (ESL) Instruction as Part of Vocational Educational Training. **(Remove as Student Services reports this goal as met)**
- Allow states flexibility in documenting hours of TANF recipient participation in allowable work activities, such as vocational education and education leading to employment. The preamble language in reference to both vocational education and education directly related to employment state that these activities should be “supervised no less frequently than daily” and that the hours of CalWORKs student participation in these activities be documented by service providers “no less than every two weeks.” These documentation requirements are excessively onerous and burdensome to service providers, such as community colleges. Colleges should be allowed to report hours of participation based on existing attendance and progress reporting practices applied to all students to avoid the stigmatization of CalWORKs



students. The interim final rule should also be modified to allow service providers to report no less than once per month and not every two weeks as currently required.

- Eliminate requirement for daily attendance documentation.

Child Care Issues

- Support increased funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CAMPUS) program to enable student parents to enroll and succeed in college.