

Federal Policy and Advocacy Update

(Provided by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office. Information current as of July 1, 2024).

CONGRESSIONAL UPDATE

The Republican-majority House Labor/HHS/Education Appropriations Subcommittee passed its [Fiscal Year 2025 House Labor/HHS Appropriations bill](https://docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP07/20240627/117475/BILLS-118-SC-AP-FY2025-LaborHHS-FY25LHHSSubcommitteeMark.pdf) (docs.house.gov/meetings/AP/AP07/20240627/117475/BILLS-118-SC-AP-FY2025-LaborHHS-FY25LHHSSubcommitteeMark.pdf). The bill proposes deep funding cuts to the U.S. Department of Education with a cut of \$11 billion below funding enacted for the Department in FY 2024. The bill maintains the maximum Pell Grant award and overall program level funding at \$22.5 billion. Funding is also maintained in the bill for the Strengthening Community College Training Grant (SCCTG) Program, TRIO and GEAR UP, and Workforce, Innovation and Opportunity Act dislocated worker programs. Additionally, the bill would eliminate funding for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School program and the History Black Colleges and Universities, Tribal Colleges and Universities, and Minority Serving Institutions Research and Development Infrastructure Grants, with cuts to the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (decrease of \$455 million) and Federal Work-Study (decrease of \$615 million). The bill will advance to a full House Appropriations Committee markup on July 10.

FEDERAL LEGISLATION OVERVIEW

On June 18th, President Biden announced an executive action allowing undocumented individuals married to U.S. citizens to obtain lawful permanent residence without having to depart from the U.S. while they await the processing of their case. Undocumented individuals must meet certain requirements to be eligible. They must have continuously been present in the United States for at least 10 years as of June 17, 2024 and have a legally valid marriage to a U.S. citizen as of June 17, 2024, [among other requirements](https://www.dhs.gov/news/2024/06/17/fact-sheet-dhs-announces-new-process-promote-unity-and-stability-families) (www.dhs.gov/news/2024/06/17/fact-sheet-dhs-announces-new-process-promote-unity-and-stability-families). The U.S. Department of Homeland Security estimates that about 500,000 undocumented spouse of U.S. citizens could be eligible to access this process, including approximately 50,000 children of these spouses that have a qualifying stepchild relationship to a U.S. citizen. In addition, the executive action will more efficiently facilitate certain employment-based nonimmigrant visas for some individuals, including DACA recipients and other undocumented individuals who have graduated from a U.S. higher education institution. We await more details from the Department of Education.

On June 20th, Democratic members of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives introduced [the Pell Grant Preservation and Expansion Act of 2024](https://www.hirono.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2024_pell_grant_preservation_and_expansion_act_fact_sheet.pdf) (https://www.hirono.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/2024_pell_grant_preservation_and_expansion_act_fact_sheet.pdf). The legislation doubles the maximum Pell Grant, adjusts the Pell Grant for inflation, and makes Pell Grant funding fully mandatory. The legislation also restores student eligibility for the Pell Grant to 18 semesters, provides automatic and additional aid above the maximum Pell Grant for students receiving federal public benefits, and expands the program to include DACA recipients. The Chancellor's Office has

issued a letter of support for this legislation, as it is strongly aligned to our [Federal Policy Platform](http://www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/2024-California-Community-Colleges-Federal-Policy-Platform.pdf) (www.cccco.edu/-/media/CCCCO-Website/docs/general/2024-California-Community-Colleges-Federal-Policy-Platform.pdf).

On June 21st, Judge Park Pittman from the U.S. District Court for the Northwestern District Court of Texas issued a [preliminary injunction](https://storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.txnd.390462/gov.uscourts.txnd.390462.30.0.pdf) (storage.courtlistener.com/recap/gov.uscourts.txnd.390462/gov.uscourts.txnd.390462.30.0.pdf) on the 2023 Certification Procedure rule issued by the U.S. Department of Education requiring the reduction of program length hours for Gainful Employment (GE) programs). This means that implementation of this regulation has been halted for the time being. At this time, colleges do not need to take any action in regard to this rule. The Chancellor's Office will issue further guidance as appropriate.

On June 24th, the U.S. Senate released a discussion draft of a bill to reauthorize the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA). The U.S. House of Representatives released their version (House Resolution (HR) 6655, "A Stronger Workforce for America Act") on April 10, 2024. The Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions intends to solicit feedback on the Senate draft before finalizing the bill.

FAFSA UPDATE

The rollout of the 2024-25 Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) has been met with many setbacks since its delayed launch at the end of December 2023. Following the delayed launch, the 2024-25 FAFSA form was found to have multiple errors. While the U.S. Department of Education has remedied most of these errors, there are still some pending items they are working on. The Department recently announced that it will begin processing paper 2024-25 FAFSA forms by the end of June and higher education institutions will be able to submit corrections electronically at the end of June. Batch institutional corrections, as well as paper corrections, will be available in the first half of August. The Department has also begun planning for the 2025-2026 FAFSA cycle. Jeremy Singer, current President of the College Board, will be taking a temporary leave from his role to lead strategy for the 2025-26 FAFSA form. The Department is working towards ensuring the 2025-26 FAFSA form be available on its usual timeline of Oct 1. The 2025-26 FAFSA form will remain consistent with 2024-25 form.