



June 2009 Legislative Update



Student Aid Reform Bill: The Fight continues!

During a hard fought campaign, students demanded that Congress pass a budget which includes President Obama's proposal to put students before banks and expand federal student aid programs. The Education committee members are drafting legislation to:

- End the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program, collecting \$94 billion in savings to make the Pell grant program an entitlement, ensuring adequate funding for the future.
- Expand the Perkins loan program by \$6 billion dollars.
- Create an Access and Completion program with \$2.5 billion dollars over 5 yrs to support state, national, and local initiatives encouraging college completion.

This bill to reform student aid is expected to be marked up in the House of Representatives Education and Labor committee by the end of June and ready for a floor vote in July. The Senate will follow a similar timeline.

The federal budget passed by Congress at the end of April, included reconciliation instructions to the education and health care committees. Budget Reconciliation instructions allow members of congress, with jurisdiction over a particular program or area, to craft a bill to find savings in that specified area. Budget Reconciliation also allows the newly crafted bill. to be passed with a simple majority vote, not two-thirds, or "super majority", vote that is required for other pieces of legislation. Budget Reconciliation also gives a specific deadline for the new bill to be passed. In the case of the student aid reform bill the deadline is October 15, 2009.

This reconciliation language is important because it provides an option for the bill to pass with fewer votes, if necessary. The budget also included reconciliation language for a healthcare reform bill. The student aid reform bill will be closely tied to the timeline of the healthcare reform bill, with both bills needing to be passed out of the committee by the October 15th deadline.

Members from both the House and Senate have expressed concern for the President's reform proposal. During a hearing last week, Secretary of Education Arne Duncan testified on the President's appropriations request and the student aid reform proposal. Several members in both chambers questioned if putting more money in the Pell grant program was the best use of savings from the FFEL program.

Fiscal Year 2010 Appropriations

A detailed version of President Obama's funding requests for specific programs was released on Thursday May 7, 2009. Although his budget outlines a 32% increase in higher education financial aid programs from 2008 budget numbers, many of USSA priority programs are requested to be appropriated at 2009 funding levels. The chart below outlines the funding history for some of these programs, including the President's request for the FY 2010.

Program	FY 2008 Enacted	FY 2009 enacted	President's Request FY2010
<i>Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP)</i>	\$303.4 million	\$313.4 million	\$313.4 million
<i>Child Care Access Means Parents In School (CCAMPIS)</i>	\$15.5 million	\$16.0 million	\$16.0 million
<i>Pell Grant</i>	16.3 billion	19.4 billion	28.6 billion
<i>Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (SEOG)</i>	\$757.5 million	\$757.5 million	\$757.5 million
Leveraging Educational Assistance Partnerships (LEAP)	\$63.8 million	\$63.8 million	\$63.8 million
<i>Work-Study</i>	\$980.4 million	\$1.1 billion	\$980.4 million
<i>TRIO</i>	\$828.2 million	\$848 million	\$848 million

* the numbers listed were reported by the U.S. Department of Education, Committee for Education Funding and the United States Student Association

Although President Obama's funding requests leave many important programs without much needed increases, there is still hope for support from Congress. The House Appropriations committee approved its FY 2010 302(b) subcommittee allocations on June 9, 2009 by a party line vote of 34-21. The 302(b) subcommittee allocations outline how much money each appropriations subcommittee will have to distribute amongst programs within their jurisdiction. The Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education Subcommittee received \$160.65 billion, \$7.5 billion more than FY 2009. The Labor, Health and Human Services and Education subcommittee is expected to decide appropriations for these and other education programs in early July.

The Federal DREAM Act

On March 26th 2009, the American DREAM Act, H.R. 1751, was reintroduced in the House of Representatives along with S.729, the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act (DREAM) in the Senate. The reintroduction of this powerful legislation, that will help over 65,000 students access an affordable education every year, came just days after hundreds of students marched to the nation's capitol demanding passage of the DREAM Act. If passed, the DREAM

Act would offer undocumented students, with good moral character, conditional permanent resident status. Conditional permanent resident status would be similar to lawful permanent resident status, except that it would be awarded for a limited duration—six years under normal circumstances. At the end of that six years, if a student receives a four or two year degree, remains in good academic standing for two years, or service in the military for three years, that conditional status becomes permanent. To qualify for benefits under the DREAM act, a student must have been in the United States 5 years before the law is enacted and before age 16. The latest version of the DREAM Act also includes a provision that caps eligibility for benefits under the DREAM Act at age 35.

Senators Richard “Dick” Durbin (D-IL) and Richard Lugar (R-IN) are the original co-sponsors of the DREAM Act in the Senate. Representatives Howard Berman (D-CA), Lincoln Diaz-Balart (R-FL), and Lucille Roybal-Allard (D-CA) are original co-sponsors of the American DREAM Act in the House.

Current focus on the DREAM Act is encouraging Members of Congress to support and cosponsor the DREAM Act. The DREAM Act currently has 70 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and 22 co-sponsors in the Senate. As we move forward in the legislative process, bipartisan cosponsorship will be vital to passing this bill. There is a list of current cosponsors included below.

In addition to growing support for the DREAM in congress, a number universities and businesses have endorsed the bill. Most recently, the Presidents of Stanford University and Harvard University expressed their support for undocumented students. President John Hennessy, from Stanford university, sent letters to Senators Boxer (D-CA) and Feinstein (D-CA) and Representatives Lofgren (D-CA) and Eshoo(D-CA), voicing his "strong support for the DREAM Act." In a separate letter to Senator Kennedy, Harvard University President, Drew Faust declared her strong support for the DREAM Act and thanked the senator for his "efforts on behalf of this vitally important legislation."

The United We DREAM coalition will be holding a graduation event in Washington D.C. on June 23, 2009 at 12 p.m. The ceremony will be held at the Lower Senate Park (Louisiana Ave & D St. NW)

Co-sponsors in the House of Representative

Rep Roybal-Allard, Lucille [CA-34] - 3/26/2009	Rep Farr, Sam [CA-17] - 3/31/2009
Rep Diaz-Balart, Lincoln [FL-21] - 3/26/2009	Rep Gonzalez, Charles A. [TX-20] - 3/31/2009
Rep Lofgren, Zoe [CA-16] - 3/26/2009	Rep Ackerman, Gary L. [NY-5] - 3/31/2009
Rep Nunes, Devin [CA-21] - 3/26/2009	Rep Capuano, Michael E. [MA-8] - 3/31/2009
Rep Polis, Jared [CO-2] - 3/26/2009	Rep Engel, Eliot L. [NY-17] - 3/31/2009
Rep Cao, Anh "Joseph" [LA-2] - 3/26/2009	Rep Filner, Bob [CA-51] - 3/31/2009
Rep Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana [FL-18] - 3/26/2009	Rep McCarthy, Carolyn [NY-4] - 3/31/2009
Rep Conyers, John, Jr. [MI-14] - 3/26/2009	Rep Lee, Barbara [CA-9] - 4/21/2009
Rep Diaz-Balart, Mario [FL-25] - 3/26/2009	Rep Israel, Steve [NY-2] - 4/21/2009
Rep Capps, Lois [CA-23] - 3/31/2009	Rep Serrano, Jose E. [NY-16] - 4/21/2009
Rep Grijalva, Raul M. [AZ-7] - 3/31/2009	Rep Fattah, Chaka [PA-2] - 4/21/2009
Rep Hinojosa, Ruben [TX-15] - 3/31/2009	Rep Holt, Rush D. [NJ-12] - 4/21/2009
Rep Sanchez, Linda T. [CA-39] - 3/31/2009	Rep Weiner, Anthony D. [NY-9] - 4/21/2009

Rep Wasserman Schultz, Debbie [FL-20] - 4/21/2009
Rep Ortiz, Solomon P. [TX-27] - 4/21/2009
Rep Eshoo, Anna G. [CA-14] - 4/21/2009
Rep Davis, Susan A. [CA-53] - 4/21/2009
Rep Cleaver, Emanuel [MO-5] - 4/21/2009
Rep Schakowsky, Janice D. [IL-9] - 4/21/2009
Rep Meek, Kendrick B. [FL-17] - 4/22/2009
Rep Carson, Andre [IN-7] - 4/22/2009
Rep Woolsey, Lynn C. [CA-6] - 4/22/2009
Rep Stark, Fortney Pete [CA-13] - 4/22/2009
Rep Wu, David [OR-1] - 4/22/2009
Rep Reyes, Silvestre [TX-16] - 4/23/2009
Rep Pastor, Ed [AZ-4] - 4/27/2009
Rep Castor, Kathy [FL-11] - 4/30/2009
Rep Moore, Gwen [WI-4] - 4/30/2009
Rep Quigley, Mike [IL-5] - 4/30/2009
Rep Johnson, Eddie Bernice [TX-30] - 4/30/2009
Rep Jackson, Jesse L., Jr. [IL-2] - 5/5/2009
Rep Langevin, James R. [RI-2] - 5/7/2009
Rep Kennedy, Patrick J. [RI-1] - 5/7/2009
Rep Davis, Danny K. [IL-7] - 5/7/2009
Rep Crowley, Joseph [NY-7] - 5/7/2009

Rep Watson, Diane E. [CA-33] - 5/7/2009
Rep Clay, Wm. Lacy [MO-1] - 5/7/2009
Rep Harman, Jane [CA-36] - 5/7/2009
Rep Clarke, Yvette D. [NY-11] - 5/7/2009
Rep Olver, John W. [MA-1] - 5/7/2009
Rep Honda, Michael M. [CA-15] - 5/13/2009
Rep Waxman, Henry A. [CA-30] - 5/14/2009
Rep DeLauro, Rosa L. [CT-3] - 5/14/2009
Rep Miller, George [CA-7] - 5/14/2009
Rep Towns, Edolphus [NY-10] - 5/19/2009
Rep Maffei, Daniel B. [NY-25] - 5/20/2009
Rep Meeks, Gregory W. [NY-6] - 5/20/2009
Rep Rothman, Steven R. [NJ-9] - 5/20/2009
Rep Lowey, Nita M. [NY-18] - 5/20/2009
Rep Cummings, Elijah E. [MD-7] - 6/2/2009
Rep Jackson-Lee, Sheila [TX-18] - 6/2/2009
Rep Ellison, Keith [MN-5] - 6/2/2009
Rep McDermott, Jim [WA-7] - 6/2/2009
Rep Markey, Edward J. [MA-7] - 6/8/2009
Rep Schiff, Adam B. [CA-29] - 6/9/2009
Rep Rodriguez, Ciro D. [TX-23] - 6/10/2009
Rep Berkley, Shelley [NV-1] - 6/10/2009

Co-sponsors in the US Senate

Sen Bingaman, Jeff [NM] - 3/30/2009
Sen Boxer, Barbara [CA] - 3/30/2009
Sen Burris, Roland [IL] - 5/11/2009
Sen Cantwell, Maria [WA] - 4/22/2009
Sen Dodd, Christopher J. [CT] - 3/30/2009
Sen Feingold, Russell D. [WI] - 3/26/2009
Sen Feinstein, Dianne [CA] - 3/30/2009
Sen Gillibrand, Kirsten E. [NY] - 3/31/2009
Sen Harkin, Tom [IA] - 3/31/2009
Sen Kennedy, Edward M. [MA] - 3/26/2009
Sen Kerry, John F. [MA] - 3/30/2009

Sen Leahy, Patrick J. [VT] - 3/26/2009
Sen Lieberman, Joseph I. [CT] - 3/26/2009
Sen Lugar, Richard G. [IN] - 3/26/2009
Sen Martinez, Mel [FL] - 3/26/2009
Sen Menendez, Robert [NJ] - 3/30/2009
Sen Murray, Patty [WA] - 3/30/2009
Sen Nelson, Bill [FL] - 3/30/2009
Sen Reid, Harry [NV] - 3/26/2009
Sen Schumer, Charles E. [NY] - 4/2/2009
Sen Udall, Mark [CO] - 4/29/2009
Sen Whitehouse, Sheldon [RI] - 3/30/2009

Making the FAFSA Smarter

The Advisory Committee on Student Financial Assistance is encouraging the public to help identify Title IV higher education regulations that are duplicative, no longer necessary, inconsistent with other federal regulations, and/or overly burdensome. The Advisory Committee was created by Congress in the Higher Education Amendments of 1986 to be an independent and bipartisan source of advice and counsel on student financial aid policy to both Congress and the Secretary of Education. You can submit your comments on their website, <http://www.ed.gov/about/bdscomm/list/acsfa/edlite-publicinput.html>

The Advisory Committee will use this information to provide a comprehensive report to Congress and the Secretary of Education on streamlining regulations from all sectors in higher education. The initial focus of this review will be on Title IV. Preliminary analysis of public comment will begin on July 15, 2009. USSA is participating on the review panel as the student representative.