

Item 5

(Information/Action Item)

Update on state and federal legislation

SUMMARY:

This item provides an update on 2020-2021 state and federal legislation relevant to the California Student Aid Commission's (Commission) programs and policy priorities adopted in December 2020.

RECOMMENDATION:

This is an information item; no action is required.

BACKGROUND:

Commission staff are currently tracking 17 state legislative measures, eight of which continue to move through the first half of the 2021-22 two-year legislative session. Seven of these measures have been moved to the "Two-Year Bill" category and may be heard in policy and fiscal committees next year.

All policy committees were required to hear and pass bills from the other chamber before July 15, 2021 for them to successfully continue moving through the legislative process. AB 1456 (Medina & McCarty), legislation that reforms the Cal Grant program under the Cal Grant Equity Framework as proposed by the Commission, was passed by the Senate Education Committee on a unanimous 7-0 vote on July 14, 2021 and has since been referred to the Senate Appropriations Committee for a hearing. Commission staff have designated support positions on a total of nine state legislative measures, including SB 737 (Limón), a Commission sponsored bill seeking to update the authorizing statute for the California Student Opportunity and Access Program (Cal-SOAP).

The Legislature has until September 10, 2021, to pass bills. The Governor then has until October 10, 2021 to sign or veto bills passed by the Legislature. The 'Summary of Priority and Tracked Legislation' will be provided prior to the LAB Committee meeting to include the most recent status of each of the priority and tracked legislation, as well as a 'State Legislative Bill Tracking Matrix' to provide a concise and visual reference on the status of priority and tracked legislation.

In addition to state legislative actions, Commission staff are also closely monitoring federal legislation, policy proposals, and announcements that will impact California students. On April 9, 2021, President Biden included a provision extending eligibility for

California Student Aid Commission Legislative, Audit and Budget Committee

the Pell Grant to all students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrival (DACA) status in his proposed 2021-22 federal budget, as well as a \$1,400 increase to the maximum Pell Grant award. On June 17, 2021, Commission staff shared with all the offices of California Congressional Members a Commission-led coalition letter in support of President Biden's proposal (see attachment). Since then, Commission staff have led numerous virtual meetings with California congressional staff to advocate for this proposal. As of August 2, Congress was still considering appropriations measures, including expansion of the Pell Grant, as well as a bipartisan agreement on infrastructure funding.

RESPONSIBLE PERSON(S):

Jake Brymner, Director
Government and External Relations

ATTACHMENT(S):

Coalition Letter in Support of Extending Pell Grants to DACA Recipients

Summary of Priority and Tracked Legislation presented on September 8, 2021

State Legislative Bill Matrix presented on September 8, 2021

Update on State and Federal Legislation presentation presented on September 8, 2021