

State & Federal Legislative Update

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Sponsored Legislation

AB 1746 (Medina, McCarty, & Leyva)

Summary: Reforms the Cal Grant Program through adoption of the Cal Grant Equity Framework set proposed by the Commission.

Status: Senate Education (06-30-2022), proposed by Legislature to adopt through the State Budget for 2022-23

Sponsors:

- CA Student Aid Commission
- Campaign for College Opportunity
- Fix Financial Aid
 - Student Senate for California Community Colleges (SSCCC)
 - California State Student Association (CSSA)
 - UC Student Association (UCSA)
- UNITE-LA

Alignment with Policy Priorities:

- Maximize equitable public investment in CA students through financial aid.
- Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

AB 2286 (Irwin)

Summary: Authorizes the Commission to receive donations, bequests, grants, and philanthropic funding and also requires the Commission to publicly report at the first commission meeting of the calendar year the amount and source of each philanthropic fund received in the prior year.

Status: Senate Education (06-22-2022)

Position: Sponsor

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

Supported Legislation

AB 2004 (Cristina Garcia)

Summary: Currently, students cannot borrow more than \$20,000 in the aggregate under the DREAM Loan program from any one participating institution. This bill increases the loan limit to \$40,000.

The bill also requires participating institutions of higher education to establish loan forgiveness options and terms of discharging debt that are consistent with federal practices and programs. Additionally, this bill requires institutions to provide comprehensive exit loan counseling and report additional demographic information on Dream Loan borrowers. It

Status: Senate Education (06-22-2022)

Sponsor: Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights (CHIRLA) & Western Center on Law & Poverty (WCLP)

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

- Ensure undocumented students – who are unable to access federal financial aid – have access to financial aid opportunities comparable to their peers

AB 2810 (Arambula)

Summary: This bill requires each CSU campus and community college district to use FAFSA data to identify students who meet the income qualifications for CalFresh and send an email informing the student that they may qualify for the CalFresh program if the student can also meet a student eligibility rule exemption.

The bill also states the intent of the Legislature to codify the [U.S. DOE's Dear Colleague Letter GEN-22-02](#) issued in January 2022, which clarified that institutions of higher education may use financial aid data to notify students about their eligibility for benefits like CalFresh.

Status: Senate Appropriations (06-27-2022)

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

- Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.).

SB 641 (Skinner)



Summary: Requires the CA Dept. of Social Services to do the following:

- Post on its website a list of programs that meet the employment & training exemption for CalFresh & instructions with specific guidance for county workers regarding processing applications, reporting, and recertification for additional students who are exempt from the student eligibility rule
- Convene a workgroup, including the Commission, to identify the steps necessary to establish a CalFresh application submission process that improves access to real-time information about applications submitted and accommodates the large influx of CalFresh applications during the beginning of a school term

Status: Assembly Human Services (06-28-2022)

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

- Advance efforts that help students access other forms of assistance to cover non-tuition expenses (e.g., CalFresh, housing assistance, affordable student lending options, etc.).

SB 1141 (Limón)

Summary: Reduces the total years of full-time attendance in certain California schools, the years of full-time high school coursework in California, and the total years of attendance in California elementary schools and California secondary schools required from 3+ years to 2+ years in order to be eligible for exemptions to non-resident supplemental tuition through the AB 540 program.

Status: Assembly Appropriations

Sponsor: California Community College Chancellor's Office & Immigrants Rising

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

- Ensure undocumented students – who are unable to access federal financial aid – have access to financial aid opportunities comparable to their peers.

SJR 9 (Limón)

Summary: Recognizes October 12, 2021, as the 20th anniversary of AB 540, the landmark legislation that created a pathway to exemptions from non-resident supplemental tuition for immigrant and undocumented students.

The measure also calls on the United States Congress to pass the American Families Plan and provide financial resources for undocumented students through the budget reconciliation process, and to adopt comprehensive immigration reform.

Status: Assembly Floor

Alignment with Policy Priorities: Maximize the effectiveness of state financial aid programs.

- Ensure undocumented students – who are unable to access federal financial aid – have access to financial aid opportunities comparable to their peers.

Legislation with Direct Impact to the Commission

AB 295 (Jones-Sawyer)

Summary: Requires the Commission to convene a working group that includes the CA Dept. of Education, public higher education segments, and college affordability stakeholders until July 1, 2025 to research and develop recommendations for the creation of a pilot program that would cover the cost of postsecondary education by replacing the system of charging students tuition and fees. Additionally, requires the submission of a report to the Legislature on the recommendations.

Status: Senate Appropriations (placed on suspense file at June 20 hearing)

Position: Watch

AB 2069 (Villapudua)



Summary: Establishes the Golden Home Health Aide Training Scholarship Act for the Commission to administer. The program grants up to 1,000 scholarship awards of \$1,500 to each individual enrolled in a home health aide training program.

Status: Senate Health (06-29-2022)

Position: Watch

AB 2222 (Reyes)

Summary: Establishes the Golden State Social Opportunities Program until 2027 for the Commission to administer and provide grants (up to \$20,000) to students enrolled in an in-state postgraduate program who commit to working in a California-based nonprofit eligible setting for their required post degree hours of supervised experience.

Grants priority to current/former foster youth & homeless youth

Status: Senate Education (06-30-2022)

Sponsor: California Coalition for Youth

Position: Watch

AB 2661 (Waldron)



Summary: Extends scholarship benefits through the Law Enforcement Personnel Dependents Grant Program to a dependent of a firefighter employed by a tribal fire department who is killed or totally disabled in the performance of duty.

Status: Enrolled and awaiting Gubernatorial action

Position: Watch

AB 2880 (Bonta)

Summary: Extends the sunset date of the College Access Tax Credit (CATC) from 2023 to 2028, allocates a portion of the moneys in the CATC Fund to the California Educational Facilities Authority to do outreach and inform taxpayers about the credit, and permits the Commission make disbursements in any fiscal year in which there are sufficient funds or rollover moneys allocated for future years.

Status: Senate Appropriations

Sponsor: California State Treasurer's Office

Position: Watch

SB 20 (Dodd)



Summary: A 2-year bill that requires the Commission to notify students that they may be eligible for CalFresh benefits under other exemptions other than TANF-funded Cal Grant.

Status: Assembly Appropriations

Sponsor: Coalition of California Welfare Rights Organization

SB 851 (Portantino)



Summary: Establishes the maximum tuition award amount at the same maximum tuition award amount for new Cal Grant recipients at private non-profit institutions from the prior year the same maximum tuition, adjusted by an amount equal to the CA Consumer Price Index.

This bill would also allow a California Community College Expanded Entitlement Award recipient to transfer to an independent institution of higher education and remain eligible to receive the award.

Additionally, the bill extends the Students with Dependent Children and the Foster Youth access awards to students attending a private non-profit institution of higher education.

Status: Assembly Higher Education (06-21-2022), with elements under consideration in the 2022-23 State Budget process

Sponsor: Association for Independent CA Colleges and Universities (AICCU)

Position: Watch

SB 1229 (McGuire)

Summary: Establishes the Mental Health Workforce Grant Program for the Commission to administer up to 10,000 grants to postgraduate students over a 3-year period in the amount of up to \$25,000 each. The bill requires the recipient to make a commitment to work with an eligible California non-profit or local educational agency.

Status: Assembly Higher Education, with elements under consideration in the 2022-23 State Budget process

Sponsor: State Superintendent of Public Instruction

Position: Watch

CalFresh Report Legislative Update

Making CalFresh Work for Students



Summary: Several state and federal recommendations included in the CalFresh Workgroup report, aimed at improving college student access to CalFresh and removing obstacles specific to postsecondary students.

First year progress: After a series of events to publicize the contents of the CalFresh Workgroup Report, recommendations drew the attention of state lawmakers and members of Congress, resulting in recommendations featured in legislative proposals for 2022 and the Legislature's version of the 2022-23 State Budget

Federal response: Chair Cifuentes and Commission staff met with key leaders at US Depts. of Agriculture and Education, including Undersecretary James Kvaal, to discuss recommendations and potential early actions to improve student access. Conversations are continuing, particularly around opportunity to better leverage federal student data.

- [AB 2652 \(McCarty\)](#): Included the regional hub pilot, requirement that campuses to accept EBT, and create a food pilot program for undocumented students.
 - Regional hub and EBT removed in Assembly Higher Education
 - Food pilot program for undocumented students: Held in Suspense
- [AB 2810 \(Arambula\)](#): Based on “Dear Colleague”-letter from Jan. 2022 outlining how FAFSA data can be shared to identify students who meet income qualifications for CalFresh, and workgroup recommendation to use FAFSA data to pre-populate CalFresh applications.
 - Bill to be heard in Senate Appropriations
- [H.R. 1919 \(Gomez\)](#): The Enhance Access to SNAP (EATS) Act would permanently expand eligibility to students attending institutions of higher education.
 - This would be a step towards eliminating the Student Eligibility Rule

Federal Update

H.R. 4521 – America COMPETES Act of 2022

(Rep. Eddie Johnson (D) – Texas)

Summary: Primarily addresses the United States/China trading relationship. However, it also includes the following higher education policy provisions:

- Expansion of Pell Grant eligibility to short-term programs at private nonprofit and public institutions
- Exclusion of private for-profit institutions
- Creation of a national postsecondary student unit record data system

Status: Passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on 2/4/2022

Next Steps: The Senate already passed its own version of a China trade bill, [S. 1260](#), sponsored by Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, which means H.R. 4521 will go to a conference committee where members will work out differences between the two bills.

Pell Grant Expansion Proposal



At his State of the Union address on March 1, 2022, President Biden mentioned his proposal to increase the maximum Pell Grant award by \$2,000 (\$8,495 total).

In response, on April 2022, the Commission drafted a letter calling on Congress to work with the Biden Administration to include a proposal in the 2023 Fiscal Year budget that extends Pell Grant eligibility to students with Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) permits. The Commission was joined by 19 organizations as signatories to the letter.

Congress and the Administration will negotiate changes to Pell Grant award amounts and eligibility as part of the 2023 appropriations package.