

CSSA

Legislation for Consideration

Below is proposed legislation for CSSA to take action on in 2018. This document reflects the status of these bills as of 2/6/18.

State Legislation - 2018

INFORMATION ITEMS:

AB 1858 (Calderon) Financial Aid Shopping Sheet

Summary: The Financial Aid Shopping Sheet is a tool designed by the U.S. Department of Education that higher education institutions use to help inform and notify students of their financial aid package. The Shopping Sheet allows prospective students to easily compare institutions to make informed decisions about where to attend school, and includes estimated cost of attendance, as well as median borrowing, repayment and graduation rates. This standardized form details each student's personalized information on net cost to attend each college or university, their grants and scholarships, and other available options to pay for college. AB 1858 would require all higher education systems to adopt the Financial Aid Shopping Sheet when communicating financial aid packages to students.

Analysis: The cost of higher education has a tremendous impact on both students and families, and play a critical role in the college selection process for prospective students. This Financial Aid Shopping Sheet as listed in AB 1858, will help ensure that student's decision to attend a college is based on easily comparable, transparent and accurate information. All CSU campuses have already adopted the Shopping Sheet, but this legislation would require all higher education systems to advertise the information in a user-friendly, easily comparable format.

AB 1895 (Calderon) DREAM Loan Repayment

Summary: In 2014, Governor Brown signed the DREAM Loan Program which extends loans to students who are undocumented and have financial need. Currently, repayment terms for these DREAM Loans are limited to standard repayment plans in which students make equal payments over a ten year period regardless of ability to pay. AB 1858 would require that participating CSU campuses create procedures for income based repayment plans for DREAM Loans, which allows students to make payments based on their ability to pay.

Analysis: With uncertainty at the federal level, many DACA recipients are scared to take out a DREAM Loan for fear that they will not be able to repay if they cannot be lawfully employed in the United States. By creating an income based repayment plan for DREAM Loans, if a student cannot work because DACA is discontinued or altered, they will not go into delinquency which can affect credit and future loan eligibility.

Additionally, graduates that are undocumented will be more inclined to pursue a career in public service or non-profit work that have low entry level compensation and coupled with historic wage discrimination of minority populations that are largely the recipients of DREAM Loans, allows the ability to afford their loan.

AB 1894 (Weber) College Hunger

Summary: AB 1894 would improve access to federal anti-hunger benefits for California's low-income college students by expanding the CalFresh Restaurant Meals Program to all CSU locations regardless of whether or not their county has chosen to participate in the program for the non-student population.

Analysis: Research has shown that there is a high prevalence of food insecurity and hunger on college campuses throughout California. At the CSU, one in five students experience hunger and one in ten experience homelessness while attending college, directly impeding learning and furthermore, graduation rates. This legislation would allow for students that are homeless to use their CalFresh benefits at college campus cafeterias through the Restaurant Meals Program, and aim to help fill the basic needs of the student population.

AB 1887 (Medina) Board of Trustee Student Eligibility

Summary: This legislation would allow undocumented students attending a California public secondary school, to serve on any board or commission that includes members who are pupils or minors. Additionally, AB 1887, would allow any student regardless of immigration status, to serve in any capacity in student government at a California public secondary school and receive any grant, scholarship, fee waiver, or reimbursement for expenses incurred connected with that service.

Analysis: According to Migration Policy Control, there are an estimated 72,300 undocumented students enrolled in University of California, California State University, and California Community College campuses. These students are a critical part to California's educational system, and deserve to have the ability to represent themselves on each campus.

AB 2070 (Reyes) Preventing Dating and Domestic Violence on College Campuses

Summary: This legislation would expand on the orientation requirements already in place on college campuses, requiring that there be education on the warning signs of dating and domestic violence; training on the prevention of dating and domestic violence; and on and off campus resources, laws, and policies which impact and can be utilized by the student as it relates to dating and domestic violence.

Analysis: According to the California Women's Health Survey, 40% of California women experience physical intimate partner violence in their lifetimes, with college aged women being 11% more likely to experience dating or domestic violence. Further education and resources presented to students at orientation would help lower that percentage among college women, and give them tools to utilize if they ever needed assistance.

AB 1896 (Cervantes) Sexual Assault Counselor-Victim Privilege

Summary: AB 1896 allows sexual assault counselors that are engaged in a program on the campus of a public institution of higher education, to maintain confidentiality in conversations and communications with victims of sexual assault.

Analysis: Existing law created confidentiality between sexual assault counselors located at any hospital, institution, or center commonly known as a rape crisis center, whose primary purpose is to provide advice and assistance to victims of sexual assault. AB 1896 extends that confidentiality to sexual assault counselors working on college campuses, in order to address the huge numbers

of sexual assaults occurring among students.

SB 940 (Beall) Foster Youth Cal Grant

Summary: SB 940 seeks to improve post-secondary achievement among foster youth by increasing access to the Cal Grant. This bill would remove the provision that foster youth apply for an entitlement Cal Grant within one year of high school graduation, and instead are under 26 years old. Foster youth would also be eligible for the Cal Grant for 8 years instead of 4 years, and the deadline for entitlement applications would be moved from March 2nd to September 2nd for those applying to community college.

Analysis: By age 26, just 4 percent of former foster youth have earned a Bachelor's degree, compared to 36 percent of the same population of young adults, and only 9 percent of foster youth received the Cal Grant. Easier access to California's largest financial aid program as outlined by SB 940 would allow former foster youth a greater opportunity and ability to achieve a Bachelor's degree.

SB 968 (Pan) Mental Health Counselors

Summary: This bill would require that there be one full-time equivalent mental health counselor per 1,000 students at each higher education institution in California. SB 968 requires that each institution report to the Legislature how funding was spent and the number of mental health counselors employed on each of its campuses, on or before January 1, 2020, and every 3 years thereafter.

Analysis: College campuses are seeing a huge influx of students seeking help for serious mental health problems, yet college counseling centers are severely understaffed and are forced to turn students away. Recent statistics show that the CSU system has 2,355 students per counselor, and that only three CSU campuses meet the current standard ratio of one counselor per 1,500 students. SB 968 would work to meet the needs of students seeking crucial mental health support.

SB 1004 (Wiener) Standardizing MHSA-PEI Programs

Summary: SB 1004 would standardize high-quality Prevention and Early Intervention (PEI) programs that are funded by the Mental Health Services Act (MHSA). Moving forward, counties would be required, at a minimum, to spend a portion of their PEI funding on at least one of the following three categories: early psychosis and mood disorder detection and intervention, college mental health outreach, or childhood trauma prevention and early intervention.

Analysis: These statewide standards would ensure that all children, transition age youth, and young adults have access to treatment that can stem the progression of serious mental illness. The research is clear that prevention and early intervention leads to better outcomes, with lower rates of hospitalization, homelessness and incarceration but higher rates of graduation and employment.

State Legislation - 2018

ACTION ITEMS:

AB XX (Caballero) Emergency Student Housing Loan Program

Summary: The Student Housing Emergency Act would take an already existing best practice in the field of homelessness called “Rapid Rehousing”, and tailor it to the CSU system through a pilot program.

Eligible students at participating campuses, three in total, would submit proof of a housing emergency to the appropriate staff on campus. The staff member would then identify a housing option for the student, and the campus would pay the rent for that housing option for at minimum one semester, and up to two semesters maximum.

Campuses would seek eligibility to participate in the program through the CSU Board of Trustees. The cost to facilitate the program, as well as the pilot study, would be absorbed by the existing university, campus and Chancellor’s Office staff.

Analysis: California State University (CSU) students face many challenges with regards to affording their education. While many students struggle to meet all their costs, and keep a roof over their heads, many students lose housing while in school. This loss of housing has an obvious impact on that student’s ability to persist in college.

Additionally, based on data collected at CSU Long Beach, approximately 10 percent of students in the CSU may encounter housing insecurity, and are in danger of losing housing at any time.

Lastly, students who lose housing are more likely to not continue their education and drop out of college, leading to a higher risk of becoming chronically homeless.

Recommendation: Sponsor

SB 691 (Lara) Immigration Protected Status

Summary: Existing law states it is the policy of the state to afford all persons, regardless of multiple classifications, equal rights and opportunities in post-secondary educational institutions in California. This bill would include immigration states within this protected status under the Equity in Higher Education Act. This was accomplished for K-12 public education by AB 699 (O’Donnell) last year. This bill would create parity between higher education and K-12.

Analysis: California has worked to ensure that undocumented students are able to attain postsecondary education in the same way every other Californian is able to do so. While not exclusively for undocumented students, AB 540 (Firebaugh, Ch. 814, Stats. 2001) exempts California nonresidents from paying nonresident tuition at our public higher education institutions if they meet certain criteria. Including immigration status as a covered basis under the Equity in Higher Education Act will make very clear California’s continued commitment to all people looking to further their education.

Recommendation: Support