



UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–LA CROSSE
STUDENT ASSOCIATION
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SA1920-022: Resolution to Support S.2557 Student Aid Improvement Act of 2019

DATE: 10/22/2019

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SPONSOR(S): Legislative Affairs Committee, K.C. Cayo, Isabelle Lyon, Nancy Lee, Brice Hansen, Jake Myers, Alaina Goodreau, Evelyn Yuengst

WHEREAS Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), the chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, said his top priorities for a bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965 include amending the law with a package of eight new bipartisan bills that would streamline the application for federal student aid, and simplify student loan repayment; and

WHEREAS the proposal aims to cut the 108 questions on the Free Application for Financial Student Aid (FAFSA) application down to roughly two dozen, which is a step that experts have said could lead to more low-income students finishing the process and receiving aid each year; and

WHEREAS the proposal aims to streamline the repayment system for students and graduates by offering two options: a standard 10-year repayment plan and an income-based repayment plan that would automatically deduct a set percentage of a borrower's income from their paycheck; and

WHEREAS the proposal provides permanent mandatory funding, \$255 million each year, for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions; and

WHEREAS the proposal would also reinstate Pell Grants for incarcerated students who are eligible for parole, and would allow them to use Pell grants for prison-education programs; and

WHEREAS the proposal would increase maximum Pell Grant awards; and

WHEREAS the proposal would ensure students can understand their financial aid offers; and

WHEREAS the proposal would allow students to answer up to 22 questions on the current FAFSA with one click by using data the federal government already has from the IRS – which would reduce the burdensome verification process; and

WHEREAS the proposal would later add three additional bipartisan provisions including the College Transparency Act, the Education of the Deaf Act, and the Educational Opportunity and Success Act; and

WHEREAS this proposal would make a positive impact on students at the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse, as well as throughout the entire United States; and



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WHEREAS this proposal would increase university admissions among under-represented students; and

WHEREAS federal policies like this impact all universities across the United States, not just the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Student Association hereby supports S.2557, i.e. the Student Aid Improvement Act of 2019, which was drafted by a bipartisan group of 35 US Senators – including 20 Democrats and 15 Republicans.

THEREFORE BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that, upon passage by the Student Senate, the University of Wisconsin – La Crosse Student Association shall forward a copy of this resolution to the offices of Representative Bryan Steil, Representative Mark Pocan, Representative Ron Kind, Representative Gwen Moore, Representative Jim Sensenbrenner, Representative Glenn Grothman, Representative Mike Gallagher, Senator Ron Johnson, Senator Tammy Baldwin, Senator Lamar Alexander (R-TN), Wisconsin Representative Jill Billings, Wisconsin Senator Jennifer Shilling, University of Wisconsin System President Ray Cross, and the University of Wisconsin System Student Representatives.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dana Nielsen'.

Dana Nielsen
President, Student Senate
Vice President, Student Association

11-06-2019

Date

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sita Agterberg'.

Sita Agterberg
President, Student Association

11-06-2019

Date



The Student Aid Improvement Act of 2019

Package of Eight Bipartisan Bills

Drafted by 35 Senators – 20 Democrats, 15 Republicans

1. Provides permanent mandatory funding, \$255 million each year, for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority Serving Institutions.
2. **FAFSA simplification:** Reduces the number of questions on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid from 108 to 17-30. This also means that 250,000 students will now be eligible for a Pell grant, and an additional 1.3 million students will be eligible for the maximum Pell grant award. *(Alexander and Jones)*
3. **Pell grants for prisoners:** Allows incarcerated individuals who are eligible for parole to use a Pell grant for prison-education programs. *(Schatz, Lee and Durbin)*
4. **Short-Term Pell:** Allows students to use their Pell grants at high-quality short-term skills and job training programs that lead to credentialing and employment in high-demand fields like health care or cybersecurity. *(Portman, Kaine, Cardin, Gillibrand, Hassan, Klobuchar, Stabenow, Baldwin, Brown, Capito, Coons, Ernst, Jones, Moran, Shaheen, Sinema, Smith, Wicker and Braun)*
5. **Simplify aid letters:** Ensures students can understand their financial aid offers. *(Grassley, Smith, Cassidy, Ernst, Hassan, Jones, Klobuchar, Manchin and Rubio)*
6. **Increases the maximum Pell grant award.**
7. To pay for this package, a bipartisan proposal that both President Obama and President Trump have supported to ensure that students who opt to pay back their loans under the income driven repayment plan pay the full 10 percent of their discretionary income as the law intended.
8. **FAFSA Act** – Allows students to answer up to 22 questions on the current FAFSA with one click by using data the government already has from the IRS. This would also reduce the burdensome verification process. The Senate has already passed this once. This provision is within the jurisdiction of the Senate Finance Committee, and will be included once the package is ready for consideration on the Senate floor. *(Alexander, Murray, Senators Collins, Cornyn, Gardner, Hassan, King, Stabenow, Tillis and Whitehouse)*

Three additional provisions supported by 30 Senators from both sides of the aisle which should be included in this package at a later date:

- **The College Transparency Act:** Creates a Student unit record system to help students and families compare how students performed at specific colleges and universities. *(Warren, Cassidy, Baldwin, Brown, Casey, Cornyn, Duckworth, Ernst, Gardner, Graham, Grassley, Hassan, Hyde-Smith, Jones, Kaine, Klobuchar, Murphy, Perdue, Roberts, Romney, Scott, Sinema, Smith, Sullivan, Tillis, Toomey and Whitehouse)*
- **The Education of the Deaf Act:** Reauthorizes Gallaudet University in Washington, D.C. and has a long history of bipartisan support.
- **The Educational Opportunity and Success Act:** Reauthorizes the TRIO program which helps low income, first generation, and other disadvantaged students enroll and succeed in a college or university program. *(Collins, Baldwin, Capito and Tester)*