

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 30, 2006
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HACU Applauds Assembly Passage of Assembly Bill (AB) 358

SACRAMENTO, CA - The Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU) today applauded the California State Assembly's passage of Assembly Member Liu's AB 358.

AB 358 reestablishes a policy for adjusting the Cal Grant maximum award for students attending independent colleges and universities. Assembly Bill 358 will strengthen the program by assuring that all awards for students are set by a long-term policy that provides consistency in how students are treated over time, thus allowing students and families to make better financial plans for their college experience.

Currently, there is no funding policy for Cal Grant students attending independent colleges, leaving them subject to dramatic cuts in the funding levels for their Cal Grants awards. During the last two budget cycles there have been cuts to the maximum size of the awards, leaving students struggling to pay their tuition and fees. AB 358 would offer Cal Grant students at independent colleges, including Latino students who traditionally have been under-served in higher education, stability in funding their educational experience and would allow them to obtain their dream of a college degree.

"HACU is pleased that the California State Assembly passed AB 358, which will provide Cal Grant recipients who choose to attend a California private college with stability in the funding of their awards. We encourage Governor Schwarzenegger to sign this piece of legislation which had significant bipartisan support," said Antonio Flores, President and CEO of HACU.

Currently, HACU has over 97 members in the state of California and in 2005 opened a regional office located in Sacramento to handle Hispanic higher education legislative and policy issues in the western region of the U.S.

HACU represents more than 450 colleges and universities committed to Hispanic higher education success in the U.S., Puerto Rico, Latin America and Spain. Although its member institutions in the U. S. represent less than 10% of all higher education institutions nationwide, together they are home to more than two-thirds of all Hispanic college students. HACU is the only national educational association that represents Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSIs).

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