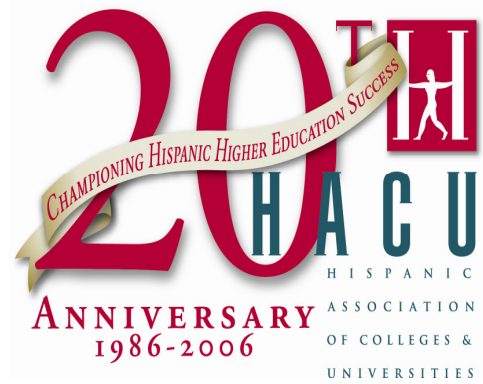


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HACU's California Legislative Priorities for 2006 (As of May 15, 2006; excludes budget priorities)

Financial Aid

HACU is committed to ensuring that the lack of financial aid will not keep needy students from obtaining their dream of a college education. To this end, we are supportive of legislation that expands financial aid to traditionally under-represented and low-income students, and ensures that awards cover the costs associated with the enrollment and attendance needs of students.

AB 1315 (Liu): Cal Grant B allows financially needy students to cover the indirect costs associated with attending college. While the Cal Grant B used to cover about 20% of indirect costs; it currently only covers around 11% of those costs. AB 1315 will slowly increase the size of the award until it covers 20% of indirect costs. This bill is important to Latino students who cannot successfully complete a post-secondary education if they cannot cover the costs of books, supplies, or transportation.

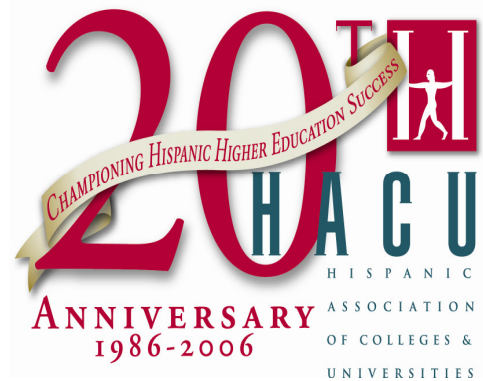
AB 2813 (De La Torre): AB 2813 will increase the availability of financial aid in three important ways that would benefit Hispanic students:

- 1) Allows all Cal Grant B Program recipients to be eligible for first-year tuition and fee benefits. Currently, only the top 2% of Cal Grant B recipients, who represent the neediest students, are awarded tuition and fee benefits their first-year. AB 2813 would allow more needy students to attend four-year colleges straight out of high school without worrying about how to cover tuition and fees.
- 2) Raises the age cap for the California Community College Transfer Entitlement Program from 24 to 27. Hispanic students tend to be older re-entry students; increasing the age cap would make a larger number of Hispanic students eligible for an award.
- 3) Increases the number of competitive grants from the current 22,500 to 45,000. Currently, approximately 100,000 students who were eligible for a competitive Cal Grant but did not receive an award. AB 2813 will significantly increase the number of students who could afford to go to college.

AB 358 (Liu): This bill would set the Cal Grant awarded to students attending private institutions at 90% of the General Fund cost of educating a student at a four-year institution. This would make the award for our students attending those institutions less arbitrary and less subject to dramatic cuts during difficult financial times.

SB 160 (Cedillo): SB 160 would allow AB 540 students to apply for, and participate in, state financial assistance to the extent the federal law permits. Although AB 540 students represent only a small segment of the student population, it is imperative that they have the financial resources needed to become productive residents of the state.

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College Access

HACU is committed to ensuring the full access and participation of Hispanic students in post-secondary institutions. The following legislation takes steps towards providing students with the necessary opportunities to accomplish these goals. HACU will continue to monitor and support related bills as we fulfill our commitment as the champion of Hispanic success in higher education.

SB 1709 (Scott): SB 1709 has six key provisions:

- Directs the Governor to convene a “State of College Opportunity” meeting every two years through 2015
- Mandates family notification of college opportunities
- Improves K-12 and community college coordination
- Requires a 10-year enrollment plan for the entire education system
- Decreases costs per graduate by 10% by focusing on increasing completion rates
- Calls on the state to develop a decade-long financing plan for California higher education

Among the provisions most important to HACU is the requirement that parents be notified of the post-secondary education opportunities available to their children, including information on the entrance requirements to California colleges and universities.

Currently, 80% of all Latinos enrolled in a California public post-secondary institution attend a California community college. By improving coordination between K-12 and community colleges, we can increase the pipeline of students able to go on to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees.

Finally, our public universities have long struggled with the ups and downs of the economy and its impact on their funding streams. The state should develop a plan that guarantees that schools receive the funding necessary to educate our workforce.

SB 1563 (Escutia): California Community Colleges Early Assessment Pilot. The Community College Early Assessment Program would give Latino students a better understanding of their readiness for college level work and give them time to adequately prepare to attend a California community college. The California State University system already provides this invaluable service to prospective students and we hope that by expanding the program to community colleges we can increase the pipeline of students going on to complete undergraduate and graduate degrees.