



STATE HIGHER EDUCATION EXECUTIVE OFFICERS ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Lamar Alexander
Chairman
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Doug Jones
Member
Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

October 22, 2019

Dear Chairman Alexander and Senator Jones,

The State Higher Education Executive Officers write to provide appreciation and strong support for the FAFSA Simplification Act of 2019.

SHEEO serves the chief executives of statewide governing, policy, and coordinating boards of postsecondary education and their staffs. SHEEO aims to ensure equitable education for all Americans. Our members see firsthand the barriers that the FAFSA can create to enrolling and graduating the students our states need to power state economies and reduce the cycle of poverty.

The Free Application for Federal Student Aid is the way almost 20 million Americans access federal, state, and institution-based financial aid to go to college each year. The complexity of the form, and the effect of the verification processes, is also one of the biggest barriers for many of our most vulnerable students to entering a postsecondary institution.

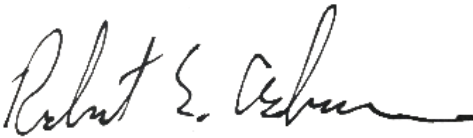
We see great value for our states in the FAFSA Simplification Act of 2019, based on four key aspects.

1. Statewide efforts to promote FAFSA completion and college enrollment thrive on simple messages. The new simple Pell Grant formula will allow statewide college access messaging campaigns to inform students and families about how much Pell Grant they will likely be eligible for based on a table or simple calculator.

2. States and public institutions depend on the federal need analysis formula to annually award \$8.2 billion dollars in state appropriated student financial aid. By continuing the availability of this calculation and most of the variables behind it, our states will have the stability to continue awarding state and institutional aid without disruption.
3. FAFSA filing can quickly become difficult for applicants when sorting through difficult financial questions. By relying on tax information the federal government already has on file, students and families do not have to find additional information and it's therefore less likely that they will be selected for burdensome verification processes.
4. The flexibility provided to financial aid administrators regarding their professional judgement, allowing applicants to file provisionally and independently, will be a game changer for our states' most vulnerable students.

Thank you both for your strong commitment to this issue. It is important to enact this reform which will help us reach our states' goals.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert E. Anderson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Robert E. Anderson
President