

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
ACR 20 (Medina and McCarty)
As Introduced February 4, 2021
Majority vote

SUMMARY:

Proclaims the month of February 2021 as Financial Aid Awareness Month, to raise awareness of the importance of student financial aid and mobilize efforts to increase completion rates of financial aid applications to maximize the state's investment in its students, especially low-income and first-generation students.

Major Provisions

- 1) For many California students and families, access to student financial aid is the single determining factor between choosing to pursue higher education or not, especially for low-income and first-generation students.
- 2) Financial aid includes federal Pell Grants, the Federal Work-Study Program, federal student loans, the Cal Grant Program, the Middle Class Scholarship, the California DREAM Loan Program, institutional-based aid, and public and private scholarships.
- 3) The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and the California Dream Act Application (CADAA) are the two primary applications students use to apply for federal, state, and institutional-based financial aid, depending on their United States citizenship status.
- 4) Awareness of the existence of financial aid and a clear understanding of the financial aid process itself are essential to making access to postsecondary education a reality for students across the state, especially for those that have historically been excluded from such attainment.
- 5) The global COVID-19 pandemic exacerbates the challenges and financial barriers many students experience in pursuit of higher education, elevating the importance of financial aid awareness now more than ever.

COMMENTS:

According to the Author:

This resolution is an important first step in recognizing that we need to do more for our students, especially when many face great financial uncertainty about their future and educational opportunities due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. ACR 20 encourages the Legislature to spread the word among their constituencies about the importance of financial aid – and remind students to file their FAFSA or CADAA by the March 2nd priority deadline. It thus affirms California's support for expanding equity across its higher education system and investing in first-generation and low-income students.

Arguments in Support:

California Student Aid Commission writes in support: "For many California students and families, access to financial aid is the single determining factor between choosing to pursue higher education or not, especially for low-income and first-generation students. ACR 20 is a vital step in mobilizing California's resources to inform students and families about the financial aid opportunities available for postsecondary education."

Arguments in Opposition:

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS:

No fiscal impact

VOTES:

ASM RULES: 11-0-1

YES: Cooley, Cunningham, Bennett, Flora, Gipson, Kamlager, Lee, Levine, Maienschein, Mathis, Villapudua

ABS, ABST OR NV: Ramos

UPDATED:

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