



State of Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board

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Scott Walker
Governor

John Reinemann
Executive Secretary

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
FROM: John Reinemann, HEAB Executive Secretary
RE: HEAB Support for SB 406
DATE: February 5, 2014

I write and appear in support of SB 406, which receives a public hearing today in your committee.

HEAB supports SB 406. HEAB also supports AB 532, the companion bill to SB 406.

SB 406 and AB 532 re-name the major grant programs administered by HEAB, which are

- The Wisconsin Higher Education Grant (WHEG) which is available to students at UW System schools, the Wisconsin Technical College System campuses, and the state's two Tribal colleges; and
- The Wisconsin Tuition Grant (WTG) which is available to students at Wisconsin's nonprofit private colleges and universities who are members of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Private Colleges and Universities (WAICU).

Both WHEG and WTG grants are awarded based on financial need. In total the programs provide \$105 million in grant aid to Wisconsin students in 2012-2013.

- In 2012-2013 WHEG provided 22,470 grants to students in the Wisconsin Technical College System. The total amount provided was \$19.2 million; the average grant was \$855.
- The same year WHEG provided 31,769 students at UW System campuses with grants. The total amount provided was \$58.3 million; the average grant was \$1,835.
- WHEG grants to students at Tribal colleges served 349 students in 2012-2013. The total distributed was \$465,952 and the average grant was \$1,335.
- WTG grants for 2012-2013 provided assistance to 10,778 students at WAICU schools. WTG grants for 2012-2013 totaled \$27.1 million and averaged \$2,514.

Re-naming WHEG and WTG as suggested in SB 406 and AB 532 is a recommendation of the 2012 Commission on Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization, also known as the "Act 176 Commission" (created by 2011 Act 176). The Commission's final report is available online at <http://heab.wisconsin.gov/commission/index.html>; see this recommendation on page 4, item 6. (For an explanation of related issues see the final report, pages 27 and 28.)

MORE

Recommendation 6 of the Act 176 Commission is as follows:

6. The Commission recommends re-naming the WTG and WHEG programs so that these grant programs share the same name; that an acronymic suffix be retained to designate which sector is being referred to as Wisconsin Grant-UW, Wisconsin Grant-WTCS, Wisconsin Grant-WAICU, and Wisconsin Grant-Tribal Colleges; and that the current system of separate formulae and appropriations should be retained.

The Commission felt that

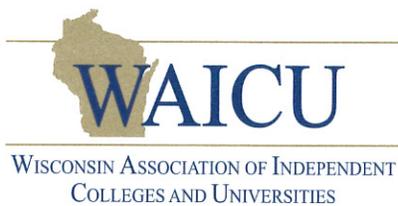
- Re-naming the grant programs would make it easier for students and families to understand that the grants are from the State of Wisconsin and are taxpayer assistance paid to each specific student (through their college or university) in order to help recipient students pay their tuition.
- This “branding” of the grants as “aid from the State of Wisconsin” would serve to give appropriate recognition to the state and to the general fund for the assistance being offered. With WHEG funding and WTG funding totaling over \$100 million annually, it is only appropriate that Wisconsin students understand the taxpayer-supported nature of this assistance. (Together these programs provide approximately 80% of the total aid awarded by HEAB to Wisconsin students.)
- It was also concluded by the Commission that if the grant programs shared a common name, it might be easier for students and families to compare financial aid packages between colleges in cases where a student had applied to more than one college whose students are able to participate in the WHEG or WTG programs. Comparisons across schools from different academic sectors would be particularly simplified.

I note that Senate Amendment 1 has been introduced to SB 406. SA1 would remove general wording regarding the current Wisconsin Tuition Grant program and replace it with more-specific wording listing schools with membership in the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities (WAICU) as participants in the WTG / Wisconsin Grant program.

HEAB supports SA1 to SB 406. We believe that the amendment reflects the unanimous will of the Act 176 Commission in this matter. The designation of WAICU echoes what is presently done in statute regarding the WTG program, and this definition of eligibility in the WTG / Wisconsin Grant program is consistent with the wishes of Commission members and with the final report of the Commission.

Please let me know if you have additional questions or concerns on SB 406 or AB 532.

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CARTHAGE COLLEGE
COLUMBIA COLLEGE OF NURSING
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
LAKELAND COLLEGE
LAWRENCE UNIVERSITY
MARIAN UNIVERSITY



WISCONSIN'S PRIVATE, NONPROFIT COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES
WORKING TOGETHER TO ADVANCE EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY

MARQUETTE UNIVERSITY
MEDICAL COLLEGE OF WISCONSIN
MILWAUKEE INSTITUTE OF ART & DESIGN
MILWAUKEE SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING
MOUNT MARY UNIVERSITY
NORTHLAND COLLEGE
RIPON COLLEGE
ST. NORBERT COLLEGE
SILVER LAKE COLLEGE OF THE HOLY FAMILY
VITERBO UNIVERSITY
WISCONSIN LUTHERAN COLLEGE

TESTIMONY

By

Dr. Rolf Wegenke, President

Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities

on

2013 Senate Bill 406

and

2013 Senate Amendment 1

Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges

Chair Harsdorf, members of the committee, my name is Rolf Wegenke. I am president of the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, or WAICU. WAICU is the official organization of Wisconsin's 23 private, nonprofit colleges and universities and their over 60,000 students.

I am speaking in support of SB 406 and Senate Amendment 1 which would change the names of Wisconsin's four major student aid programs. The 2012 Commission on Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization—created by the Legislature—on which I was privileged to serve with Senator Fred Risser and Representative Joan Ballweg—unanimously endorsed the name change to reinforce the principle that all Wisconsin students attending a Wisconsin college or university, regardless of sector should be treated equitably.

The Commission report states, "The Commission recommends re-naming the WTG and WHEG programs so that these grant programs share the same name; that an acronym suffix be retained to designate which sector is being referred to as the Wisconsin Grant-UW; Wisconsin Grant-WTCS; **Wisconsin Grants-WAICU**; Wisconsin Grant-Tribal Colleges; and that the current system of separate formulae and appropriations be retained. The Commission also supported continuation of the current process of establishing formulae for each sector's grant program, with the UW, WTCS, WAICU, and Tribal Colleges making an annual recommendation to the HEAB Board, and the HEAB Board making the decision on formula construction for each sector's grants." The original draft of SB 406 departed from the Commission recommendation. Instead of "Wisconsin Grants-WAICU," the draft says, "Wisconsin grants-private, nonprofit colleges."

Senate Amendment 1 restores the Commission's original intent. The Commission unanimously supported the original version—as did our colleagues from the UW and WTCS in the Assembly hearing—for the following reasons:

1. Increasingly, proprietary or for-profit institutions are calling themselves “private.” The Commission report unanimously rejected State of Wisconsin funding for proprietary or for-profit schools. The Commission also included substantial documentation in its report in support of this conclusion. The current draft opens the door for the very confusion which the Commission attempted to prevent.
2. Elsewhere in the bill draft, a “private college” is defined as a nonprofit institution. However, just referring to nonprofit status is insufficient given that there are not-for-profit colleges (for example, Upper Iowa University) from out-of-state who have sought to steer Wisconsin student aid into their coffers. No state in the United States allows out-of-state, nonprofit institutions to participate in their student grant programs. The current language, inadvertently, opens the door to outcomes none of us would desire, and Senate Amendment 1 remedies the problem and preserves the Commission and Senator Risser's original intent.
3. The Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB) statutes currently establish an explicit role for WAICU by name. For example, current state law specifies that, “By April 10, 1998, and annually thereafter, the Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities shall develop and submit to the board for its review under sub. (1) a proposed formula for the awarding of grants under s. 39.30 for the upcoming academic year to students enrolled at private institutions of higher education.”
4. The Legislature and the Governor have repeatedly recognized WAICU by name in statute and Executive Order: (ss. 15.107(25m)(c), 15.377(9), 15.67, 16.979(3), 36.31(2m)(a)1, 36.31(2m)(a)3, 38.50, 39.285, 39.437(4)(a), and 115.297) and 2011 Governor's Executive Order # 37, 2012 Governor's Executive Order #59, and 2013 Governor's Executive Order #97. Not using the term, WAICU, when the terms UW or WTCS are used would break with precedent and potentially subvert equitable treatment and create confusion as outlined in the three points above. There are also other precedents for naming state programs and facilities after specific individuals and organizations. For example, the Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Fund, and the 32nd Division Memorial Highway (named after the Red Arrow Division).

The change in the name does **not** require any college or university to be a member of WAICU. WAICU's recommendation on formula questions to HEAB is **advisory**. All decisions are made by HEAB, which is a state agency, accessible to public input.

Student aid is critically important. According to the Wisconsin Higher Educational Aids Board, in 2011-12, 61,000 Wisconsin students attending a UW campus, a Wisconsin Technical College, Tribal College, or a WAICU college or university received aid from the Higher Educational Aids

Board, BUT, in that same year, 76,000 **fully qualified** Wisconsin students were turned away because of a lack of funds. Financial aid is critical for increasing educational attainment—and for promoting the economic growth of this state.

The need for more student aid was a key recommendation of the Commission of Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization. Although SB 406 has **no fiscal effect** and does not directly address the students left behind, I have promised never to miss an opportunity to speak up for students.

I will use the words of Shakespeare to ask (and answer) an obvious question, “Would a rose by any other name smell as sweet?” – or – “Is this much ado about nothing?” Names do matter—especially to the “customer,” students. Study after study shows the public finds the financial aid process confusing: acronyms like WHEG, TG, EFC, etc. confuse students—many of whom are unclear which programs are federal and which are state. And, such confusion puts barriers in the way of the very students we want to reach. We want students to know they do have opportunity and that their state government in Wisconsin is on their side.

I urge the committee recommend and the Legislature enact SB 406 and Senate Amendment 1.

I would be happy to answer any questions.



JOAN BALLWEG

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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Madison, Wisconsin 53708-8952
Toll-free: (888) 534-0041
Fax: (608) 282-3641
Rep.Ballweg@legis.wi.gov

41ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

SB 406: Changing the names, Wisconsin higher education grants, and tuition grants,
to Wisconsin grants.

Testimony on behalf State Representative Joan Ballweg
Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
February 5, 2014

Thank you, Chair Harsdorf and members of the committee, for hearing Senate Bill 406 today. This legislation was a recommendation of the 2012 Commission on Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization, which met over the summer of 2012 to dive deeper into the issue of financial aid in our state. The commission was created from 2011 Wisconsin Act 176, the result of the 2010 Legislative Council Special Committee on Review of Higher Education Financial Aid Programs.

SB 406 itself is a simple bill. It would rename the Wisconsin Higher Education Grants and Wisconsin Tuition Grant, the Wisconsin Grant. Four sectors receive either WHEG or WTG money: UW-System, Wisconsin Technical College System, Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities, and Wisconsin Tribal Colleges. These sectors will continue to receive this aid and determine the formula for awards separately, as is done now.

The purpose for this change is to avoid confusion and offer better transparency for financial aid available to Wisconsin students attending these institutions. While WHEG - UW and WTG (which goes to WAICU schools) are essentially the same grant, it can cause confusion among students and their parents. This bill would provide a name change so Wisconsinites can clearly see the difference between the Wisconsin Grant - Technical College and Wisconsin Grant - Tribal Colleges. That difference simply being the institution you attend.

SB 406 is the result of many hours of expert deliberation and consideration. Some of those experts are with me today and will be addressing the committee as well.

Thank you for your time this morning. I'm happy to answer any questions.



February 5, 2014

To: Members of Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges

On behalf of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), this letter comes to express support for passage of SB 406. The bill renames the Wisconsin Higher Education Grant (WHEG) the Wisconsin Grant for all higher education sectors.

As a member of the Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization Commission where this issue was first discussed, I believe that having a consistent name for the Wisconsin Grant will help reduce confusion among students and parents as they consider their postsecondary options. Parents and students will be better able to compare financial aid packages from different educational institutions when they understand the varying amounts of Wisconsin Grant awards for which they may qualify.

A consistent name also will help recognize the reality that postsecondary students commonly move between several different higher education institutions before earning their degree. Students who move between institutions will be better able to recognize Wisconsin's commitment to providing grant funds when there is a consistent name for the Wisconsin Grant.

Therefore, the WTCS hopes that you will support passage of SB 406. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about SB 406 or other aspects of the significant need for financial aid among WTCS students.

Sincerely,

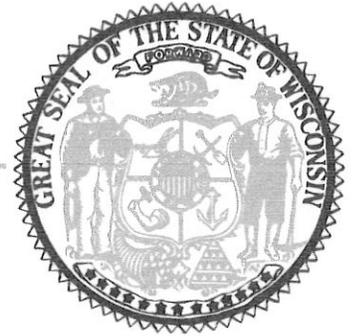
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Morna K. Foy". The signature is fluid and cursive.

Morna K. Foy
President



FRED A. RISSER
Wisconsin State Senator

February 5, 2014



Senator Sheila Harsdorf, Chair
Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
12 West, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

Dear Chairperson Harsdorf,

Thank you Chairperson Harsdorf, and committee members for holding a hearing on Senate Bill 406 which relates to changing the names of Wisconsin higher education grants and tuition grants, to Wisconsin grants. I coauthored this legislation with Representative Joan Ballweg. She has introduced companion legislation in the Assembly.

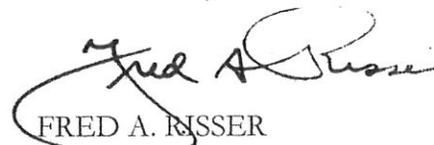
SB-406 is one of the recommendations of the 2012 Commission on Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization. As the legislative representatives to the Commission, we are introducing legislation that was recommended by the commission.

SB-406 would change the name of the Wisconsin Higher Education Grants and Wisconsin Tuition Grants to Wisconsin Grants. The WHEG and WTG programs are separated into WHEG-UW, WHEG-technical colleges, WHEG-tribal, and WTG (which is awarded to private, non-profit college students). Since these programs work in very similar ways, fund similar sorts of students, and see their formulae set in the same manner, the commission believes there would be merit in the programs sharing a common name.

There is one minor amendment that changes the *Wisconsin grants - private, nonprofit college* to *Wisconsin grants — Wisconsin Association of Independent Colleges and Universities*.

I appreciate your willingness to schedule this measure for a public hearing. It is a good, common sense bill and I encourage the committee to look favorably upon this important legislation. Please feel free to contact me directly with any questions or concerns.

Most Sincerely,


FRED A. RISSER
Wisconsin State Senate

FAR:tet
Cc: Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges

FRED A. RISSER

Wisconsin State Senator

February 5, 2014



Senator Sheila Harsdorf, Chair
Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges
12 West, State Capitol
Madison, WI 53708

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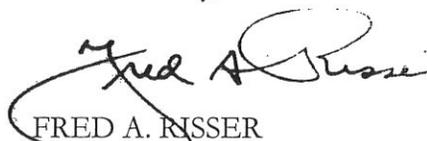
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Most Sincerely,


FRED A. RISSER
Wisconsin State Senate

FAR:tet
Cc: Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges



Bill Position
Board of Regents - University of Wisconsin System
2013-14 Legislative Session

[SB 406](#)

Wisconsin Grants

LEGISLATION

SB 406

(Risser/Balweg) Under current law, there is established, to be administered by the Higher Educational Aids Board (HEAB), a higher education grant program for postsecondary resident students enrolled at least half-time and registered as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors in the University of Wisconsin System, a technical college, or a tribal college in this state. Currently, grants under that program are referred to as "Wisconsin higher education grants" and the titles to the appropriations funding those grants specify the students funded under each appropriation, specifically, "Wisconsin higher education grants; University of Wisconsin System students," "Wisconsin higher education grants; technical college students," and "Wisconsin higher education grants; tribal college students." This bill changes the name of those grants to "Wisconsin grants" and conform the titles to the appropriations funding those grants accordingly.

Similarly, there is established, to be administered by HEAB, a tuition grant program for resident students enrolled at least half-time and registered as freshmen, sophomores, juniors, or seniors in accredited, nonprofit, post-high school, educational institutions in this state (private colleges). Currently, the appropriation funding those grants is entitled "Tuition grants" and the statute section authorizing those grants is entitled "Tuition grants." This bill changes the titles of the appropriation funding those grants and the statute section authorizing those grants to "Wisconsin grants; private college students."

Introduced: 11/21/13

Referred to: Senate Committee on Universities and Technical Colleges

UW SYSTEM POSITION

SUPPORT:

This legislation was recommended by the [2012 Commission on Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization](#). This bill changes the name of the Wisconsin Higher Education Grants and Wisconsin Tuition Grants to Wisconsin Grants. The WHEG and WTG programs are currently separated into WHEG-UW, WHEG-technical colleges, WHEG-tribal, and WTG (which is awarded to private, non-profit college students). Since these programs work in very similar ways, fund similar sorts of students, and see their formulae set in the same manner, the commission believed there would be merit in the programs sharing a common name.

This legislation would therefore change the name of these programs respectively to Wisconsin Grants-University of Wisconsin System students, Wisconsin Grants-technical college students, Wisconsin Grants-tribal college students, and Wisconsin Grants-private college students.

The UW Board of Regents **supports** SB 406 which is consistent with previous efforts to simplify and modernize financial aid programs.