r

Piorities for the 2013 Legislative Session

Expand Financial Aid

A Increase funding for the State Need Grant in order to cover the nearly 33,000 students who are eligible but don't receive funding.

A Restore funding for State Work Study to the 2010-2011 level of $15 million/year. Lower the employer match to its previous level in order to expand work study opportunities to employers in the community.

A Restore funding for financial aid and loan repayment programs which allow students to pursue their careers without being held back by debt such as the Health Professional Loan Repayment and Scholarship program and the Future Teachers Conditional Scholarship and Loan Repayment Program.

New and Dedicated Revenue

A Support passage of measures which create new revenue and do not disproportionately affect low income individuals such as instituting a capital gains tax, ending state spending on tax exemptions that have outlived their usefulness, extending the state sales tax to online sales, and automatically sun-setting tax exemptions.

A Dedicate a portion of the funds from marijuana taxation for higher education.

Financial Aid for Undocumented Students

A Pass the Washington State DREAM Act, which will remove the restriction on the State Need Grant and allow access for all Washington students.

Voter Access

A Support a range of voter access bills which would break down institutional barriers to voting for young people and students such as revised HB 2205, which would allow minors to queue voter registration prior to their 18th birthday.

A Advocate for policies which institutionalize student voter engagement plans at public universities and colleges as well as grant student governments access to residential halls for the purpose of voter registration.

Legislative Action Items for the 2013 Session

STEM Degrees

Support a previously introduced bill which removes a defunct B&O tax exemption for R&D firms and direct the savings into a fund that schools compete for to increase slots for STEM degrees.

Western Governor's University

Western Governor's University was recently recognized as a public university here in the state of Washington, as such it should be subject to the same reporting requirements as other public institutions. We support a bill which would remove WGU's exemption to the Degree-Granting Institutions Act, and thus remove it's exemption from many of the transparency and accountability requirements that ensure students are receiving a quality education.

Differential Tuition

Oppose the implementation of differential tuition that was authorized under HB 1795 two years ago, until safeguards are in place to guarantee that tuition increases are affordable, predictable, and that financial aid will be provided to offset the increased cost of tuition.

Shared Governance

Support the creation of boards similar to the University of Washington's (Provost Action Committee for Students) program, that create reasonable accommodations for students to voice concerns and register dissent with University policies.

Student Veterans

Support in-state tuition for non-resident active duty personnel or non resident veterans who are stationed in Washington state. Oppose any cuts to benefits for student veterans.

Pay it Forward

Support budget proviso to offer one 2 year and one 4 year university to study impacts of "Pay it Forward" model, as developed and proposed by the Economic Opportunity Institute.

Expanding Childcare

Rollback the significant cuts to the Childcare Matching Grant program, which provides access to higher education to student-parents.

Viniculture Education

Support the passage of a "sip and spit" policy for accredited colleges and universities with degree programs relating to viticulture, oenology, and wine business and restaurant management. This policy would allow students within these programs to taste wine within a classroom setting if they are underage.