



Washington Student Association

State Board of Directors
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Washington Student Association 2015 Legislative Agenda

Priority Items:

College Affordability

The affordability of post-secondary education is the most crucial issue facing students. We support low tuition, full funding of state financial aid, and funding of institutions of higher education at maintenance level or above. We support increased funding for higher education, including from new and dedicated revenue sources.

We propose that a minimum standard of affordability be established for Washington higher education institutions. Some potential benchmarks include: tuition being tied to 10% of the median family income; identifying a minimum percentage of state funding to higher education institutions; and defining a maximum amount that a student would be expected to cover from loans and work.

We support the repeal or amendment of Initiative 1351 in order to safeguard crucial and necessary funding for higher education.

Voter Registration Accessibility

We propose allowing more time for voter registration and updating voter information by extending the voter registration deadline until 11 days prior to the election, and in-person on the day of the election.

16-17 year olds should be allowed to pre-register to improve overall voter accessibility in Washington State. These actions will provide a much-needed increase in student and youth voting turnouts in elections that impact them directly.

Graduate and Professional Student Education

We support funding to maintain graduate and professional program competitiveness and prevent dramatic increases in graduate and professional tuition. Graduate and professional students are reliant on the reputation of their program in order to compete in the job market, and quality must be maintained so that the graduate and professional students of Washington's public universities may find relevant employment in their chosen field.

As state cuts necessity tuition increases, many graduate and professional programs are nearing a point in which it no longer pencils out to attend graduate and professional programs. By funding the universities, we hope to prevent graduate and professional school opportunities becoming reserved only for the privileged.

Ancillary Items:

Ensuring Academic Resources and Advising for Undergraduate Students

We urge the Legislature to establish policy that encourages or mandates that institutions offer academic support measures. Further, we ask that it provide institutions with the funding necessary to fully support their students academically.

Funding for Childcare

We urge the Legislature to identify additional funding for childcare for student parents. Access to affordable childcare had a large impact on a parent's ability to afford and complete school. Childcare programs have eroded after budget cuts and the recent recession.

Whistleblower Protection for Student Government

We propose that student government members be included in whistleblower protection provided to other state employees.

Remove Free-Speech Zone Restrictions

We oppose the idea of campus "free-speech zones" on principle and advocate for an act of the Legislature nullifying these zones and instead making all outdoor campus areas open-forum areas, subject to reasonable time and place restrictions

National Guard

We urge the Legislature to restore funding to the Washington National Guard Conditional Scholarship, or create a new scholarship that would provide tuition assistance for current or former members of the Washington National Guard.