

State of Emergency:

The Associated Students of Western Washington University (ASWWU) recognizes that all people should feel safe and supported within the institutions that directly affect them. People of color and people of marginalized identities are faced with obstacles within institutions which contribute to the overall disenfranchisement of these said demographics. Currently, voting agencies can prevent people from voting by establishing Voter ID Laws. People who are convicted of criminal offense are not able to vote in Federal elections. Many campuses currently do not have resources and strong advocacy for students who hold marginalized identities. Public schools in the United States are segregated by race and poverty and it is clear that minority students are underrepresented in public and private nonprofit colleges. ASWWU advocates for:

Voter Empowerment Act: H.R 12

- Authorizes automated voter registration of certain individuals and establishes other initiatives to promote voter registration, such as same day registration and voter registration of individuals under 18 years of age
- Amend the Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) which establish requirements for states to promote access to voter registration and voting for individuals with disabilities.
- Give convicted felons the opportunity to vote, unless they are currently serving a sentence, which prescribes the enforcement of this right by public or private civil action.

End Racial Profiling Act (H.R. 2851 / S. 1038)

- Requires federal law enforcement agencies to maintain policies and procedures that work to eliminate racial profiling and to cease existing practices that permit racial profiling.
- Requires state or local governmental entities or state, local, or tribal law enforcement agencies that apply for grants under the Edward Byrne Memorial Justice Assistance Grant Program and the Cops on the Beat Program to certify that they maintain adequate policies and procedures for eliminating racial profiling and have eliminated any existing practices that permit or encourage racial profiling.
- Authorizes the Attorney General to award grants and contracts for the collection of data relating to racial profiling and for the development of best practices and systems to eliminate racial profiling. Requires the Attorney General to issue regulations for the collection and compilation of data on racial profiling and for the implementation of this Act.

For Profit College Accountability

The ASWWU recognizes that for-profit colleges are engaging in manipulative and deceptive activities in order to maximize profits and student enrollment. Many for-profit schools utilize aggressive marketing and recruiting tactics, provide programs of questionable value, and often cost far more than comparable programs offered at public schools. These colleges, which are actually private companies, receive billions in federal student aid and tax subsidies. According to an investigation by the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, ninety-six percent of for-profit students take out student loans while just forty-eight percent of 4-year public school students take out loans. Fifty-four percent of students attending for-profit colleges eventually drop out leaving students in debt without the means to pay back loans. Students who attend for-profit schools are more likely to experience unemployment after leaving school. According to a National Center for Education Statistics study, twenty-three percent of students

who attended for-profit schools in 2008-9 were unemployed and seeking work. The ASWWU advocates for:

- The passage of S 396 and HR 747 to establish a committee to provide federal oversight of for-profit colleges
- Ending deceptive practices during the recruitment process, with transparency regarding retention rate statistics and after graduation job prospects
- Ending federal tax subsidies to for-profit colleges

Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act

Higher Education is not affordable or accessible for students. With tuition prices skyrocketing and the amount of student debt surpassing 1.2 trillion dollars, something needs to be done if we, as a country, want to thrive. The Higher Education Act encompasses all federal policies relating to higher education and is renewed every 6 years. When the Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act is being discussed it gives students and higher education stakeholders an opportunity to make positive changes of what we'd like to see in the legislation. ASWWU advocates for:

The passing of the **Pell Grant Protection Act (S. 2914)** which includes:

- Year Round Pell Grant
- Enforcing the Pell Grant as part of the mandatory spending program
- Automatically increasing the Pell Grant on a yearly basis depending on the rate of inflation

The passing of the Financial Aid Simplification and Transparency Act (S. 108) which includes:

- Simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid form to make it more accessible for students to apply for federal student aid.
- Streamlining federal aid programs to have one grant, the Pell Grant, one undergraduate loan, one graduate loan, and one parent loan.

The passing of the Repay Act (S. 85) which includes:

- Setting a student's annual repayment obligation under the program at 10% of the borrower's dictionary income that is less than \$25,000, adjusted for inflation. If the borrower's income is greater than \$25,000 it is 15%.
- Makes public service employees eligible for the public service employee loan forgiveness program.

The passing of the All-Year Affordability for Constant and Continual Education to Enhance Student Success (ACCESS) Act (H.R 242) which would

- Reallocate Student Debt Profits to pay for changes to the Pell Grants.

Maintain the current Perkins Loan by

- Continuing it to be a campus based program with a low interest rate and a forgiveness option.