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From: NAICU Presidents Network

Sent: Thursday, March 25, 2010 10:54 AM

To: NAICU Presidents Network

Subject: [presnet] Important Update on Student Aid Reconciliation Bill

Colleagues,

The joint health care/student aid reconciliation bill will be sent back to the House for another vote today because of a technical problem with the way the Pell Grant language was written. There is a great deal of media coverage on this matter this morning. I want to alert you to the nature of the issue, and ask your help in clarifying the matter, if asked by your member of Congress.

In the wee hours this morning, during Senate consideration of amendments to the student aid reconciliation bill (H. R. 4872), the parliamentarian struck two provisions within the Pell Grant program that he found to violate the Byrd Rule (For background, see bolded section in my [March 22 legislative update](#)).

These two provisions are:

- a hold harmless provision in the new Pell program, designed to prevent grant reductions in the event that the appropriated Pell Grant decreased, and
- a conforming change to strike obsolete language.

The hold harmless would not have taken effect until 2013.

These are minor, technical changes, and do NOT change the amount of funding available for the Pell Grant program, nor do they change the estimated maximum awards. However, this move complicates procedures, and requires the House to vote on the bill again. Final passage in the Senate is expected early this afternoon. It is our understanding that the House could vote as early as 5 p.m. today.

If you hear from your representative's office, please assure them that these minor changes to the Pell Grant program do not change what students will receive.

Thank you for your help in this complicated procedure.

David

David L. Warren
President, NAICU