



JOAN BALLWEG

WISCONSIN STATE REPRESENTATIVE

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

41ST ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

AB 532: Changing the names, Wisconsin higher education grants, and tuition grants,
to Wisconsin grants.

Testimony of State Representative Joan Ballweg
Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
December 19, 2013

Thank you, Chairman Nass and members of the committee, for hearing Assembly Bill 532 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.

AB 532 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.

AB 532 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



State of Wisconsin
Higher Educational Aids Board

P.O. Box 7885
Madison, WI 53707-7885
E-Mail: HEABmail@wi.gov

Telephone: (608) 267-2206
Fax: (608) 267-2808
Web Page: <http://heab.wi.gov>

Scott Walker
Governor

John Reinemann
Executive Secretary

TO: Members, Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
FROM: John Reinemann, HEAB Executive Secretary
RE: HEAB Support for AB 532
DATE: December 19, 2013

I write and appear in support of AB 532, which receives a public hearing today in your committee.

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

AB 532 and SB 406 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 AB 532 and SB 406 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 the 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 Assembly Amendment 1 has been introduced to AB 532. AA1 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 AA1 to AB 532. 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 AB 532 or SB 406.



December 19, 2013

To Members of Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities:

On behalf of the Wisconsin Technical College System (WTCS), this letter comes to express support for passage of AB 532. 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 AB 532. Please feel free to contact me if you have questions about AB 532 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".

Morna K. Foy
President



Morna K. Foy, President
4622 University Avenue · PO Box 7874 · Madison, WI 53707-7874 · 608.266.1207
Wis. Relay System: 711 or 800.947.6644 Fax: 608.266.1690
e-mail: info@wtcsystem.edu · www.wtcsystem.edu · www.witechcolleges.org

ALVERNO COLLEGE
BELLIN COLLEGE
BELOIT COLLEGE
CARDINAL STRITCH UNIVERSITY
CARROLL UNIVERSITY
CARTHAGE COLLEGE
COLUMBIA COLLEGE OF NURSING
CONCORDIA UNIVERSITY
EDGEWOOD COLLEGE
LAKE LAND 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 Assembly Bill 532
Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
December 19, 2013

Chair Nass, 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.

I am speaking in support of AB 532 which would change the names of Wisconsin's four major student aid programs.

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 legislatively chartered Commission of Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization, on which Representative Ballweg and I served. The AB 532 does not directly address the students left behind, but I have promised never to miss an opportunity to speak up for students.

The Commission was also the source of the recommendation to rename the four major student aid programs as Wisconsin Grants-UW, Wisconsin Grants-WTCS, Wisconsin Grants-Tribal Colleges, and Wisconsin Grants-WAICU. AB 532 is a response to the Commission.

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 acronyms put 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.

AB 532 departs from the Commission recommendation in one small, but critical point.

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 current bill draft departed from the Commission recommendation. Instead of “Wisconsin Grants-WAICU,” the draft says, “Wisconsin grants-private, nonprofit colleges.” The amendment uses the Commission’s language for the following four 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.
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 University of Wisconsin System 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.

I urge that this simple, but critically important, amendment (substituting Wisconsin grants-WAICU for Wisconsin grants-private, nonprofit colleges) be submitted for adoption in committee.

I would be happy to answer any questions.



College of Menominee Nation

December 18, 2013

Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities
Representative Stephen Nass, Chair
Room 12 West
State Capitol
P.O. Box 8953
Madison, WI 53708

Re: Support for: 2013 Assembly Bill 532

Dear Representative Nass,

The College of Menominee Nation appreciates the opportunity to share its support for the work accomplished by the 2012 Commission of Financial Aid Consolidation and Modernization and the recommendation which is now before the State Legislature.

Regarding Assembly Bill 532 –

The College of Menominee Nation supports changing the names Wisconsin Higher Education Grants and Tuition Grants to Wisconsin grants and that the current system of separate formulae and appropriations should be retained.

The College of Menominee Nation also supports continuation of the current process of establishing formulae for each sector's grant program, with 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.

Sincerely,

S. Verna Fowler, President

Main Campus

N172 State Hwy 47-55
P.O. Box 1179
Keshena, WI 54135

Phone

715.799.5600
800.567.2344

**Green Bay/Oneida
Campus**

2733 S. Ridge Road
Green Bay, WI 54304

Phone

920.965.0070
800.567.2344

Web

www.menominee.edu



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

AB 532

Wisconsin Grants

LEGISLATION

AB 532

(Ballweg/Risser) 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: 11/25/13

Referred to: Assembly Committee on Colleges and Universities

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** AB 532 which is consistent with previous efforts to simplify and modernize financial aid programs.