The Higher Education Act (HEA) was enacted in 1965 “to strengthen educational resources of our colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary education.” Today, this landmark legislation makes it possible for millions of disadvantaged students to afford a postsecondary education, and enhances the ability of thousands of colleges and universities to provide a high-quality education to low-income and non-traditional students, and prepare them to contribute to the nation’s success. Last reauthorized in 2008, the HEA is now due for renewal.

CSU Priorities for 2015: The California State University consistently provides an outstanding return on federal investments in its students, institutions, and research. With 23 campuses and approximately 460,000 students, the CSU is the largest bachelor and graduate degree university in the world, providing access – and success – for unprecedented numbers of low-income students. Each year, 100,000 new CSU graduates enter the workforce across all economic sectors.

The CSU is committed to substantially increasing student success. The system’s recently announced Graduation Initiative 2025 aims to boost CSU bachelor’s degrees earned by 100,000 over the next decade relative to current graduation rates. The initiative sets specific goals for improved completion rates for first-time freshmen, transfer students, and historically underrepresented and low-income students. Strengthened federal higher education programs will greatly assist in meeting these goals.

Pell Grants: The Pell Grant is the foundation of federal student aid, providing opportunity to millions of students who might otherwise be unable to attend college. The vast majority of Pell recipients come from families with incomes at or below $30,000. Over 201,000 CSU students receive Pell Grants, with an average grant of nearly $4,250.

- Support cost of living increases in maximum Pell Grant
- Ensure that any Pell Grant program savings stay in the program for use in future years
- Support restoration of a “year-round” Pell program in a manner that will assist low-income students, including non-traditional students, to accelerate academic progress
**SEOG and Work-Study:** The Campus-Based programs – especially Federal Work-Study (FWS) and Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) - are vital to the CSU’s efforts to attract, retain, and graduate disadvantaged students. These programs provide flexibility to financial aid administrators to package aid awards to best meet the needs of their students. They also require an institutional match, which leverages the federal investment to provide more aid to more students. SEOG helps almost 22,000 CSU students purchase items like books and supplies. More than 7,000 CSU students receive FWS awards.

- Reform the federal funding formula for these important programs to better target scarce funds to needy students at campuses serving large numbers of low-income individuals
- Devote increased FWS amounts to community service placements

**Strengthening Institutions:** About 60% of CSU students are students of color, and more than a third are in the first generation in their family to attend college. Title III and Title V of the HEA contain provisions that expand and enhance the academic quality, institutional management, fiscal stability, and self-sufficiency of institutions that serve large numbers of disadvantaged and minority students. These programs are key to closing the educational achievement gap.

- Maintain both mandatory and discretionary funding streams for MSI programs
- Continue focus on improving STEM capacity where applicable
- Permit multi-diverse institutions to compete for funds across the range of MSI programs

**Enhance Partnerships and Innovations that Boost Success:** HEA programs promote effective relationships between universities and community and business partners, community colleges and K-12 school districts to ensure student preparation and success.

- Strengthen the TRIO and GEAR UP programs, which prepare underrepresented students for college and encourage persistence. Improvements should include expanded transitional programs like summer bridge; greater focus on STEM preparation; and expansion of the Veterans Upward Bound program
- Create or strengthen federal partnerships to expand high impact practices including undergraduate research, service learning, internships, and study abroad which foster student engagement and lead to greater student success and persistence rates
- Fund through FIPSE pioneering efforts to increase student success and graduation, and publically disseminate best practices and promising approaches

**CSU Campuses**

- Bakersfield
- Channel Islands
- Chico
- Dominguez Hills
- East Bay
- Fresno
- Fullerton
- Humboldt
- Long Beach
- Los Angeles
- Maritime Academy
- Monterey Bay
- Northridge
- Pomona
- Sacramento
- San Bernardino
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San José
- San Luis Obispo
- San Marcos
- Sonoma
- Stanislaus