

***Excerpt from Executive Director's Report
WCC Foundation Executive Committee Meeting
8/14/25***

On the Federal front, fortunately, some of the most alarming elements of the house bill DID NOT come to pass in the final Public Law 119-21.

Regarding the Pell grants, there was some encouraging news. An additional \$10.5 billion in mandatory funding was dedicated to the Pell program, which we hope will help when Congress develops the FY26 budget. The administration had cited a shortfall in the Pell grant budget in the drastic cuts that it had proposed that included increasing the required credit load requirement for students. However, the rule reducing the maximum income to receive Pell has so far made it so that 11 to families with just slightly higher incomes than the lowest range can no longer get Pell grants, with a total impact of \$66,800 in lost Pell grant funds.

Another Pell change is that students receiving full cost-of-attendance scholarships from other sources will no longer be able to get Pell grants.

One positive for WCC is that starting July 2026, Pell grant eligibility will be expanded to certain "Workforce Pell Program eligible programs" in high-skill / high-wage jobs. This is something that community colleges have been advocating for for some time. SUNY will be working with the colleges to prepare us to offer these Workforce Pell programs next year.

There is also increased scrutiny of the impact of programs on student wages, by comparing students graduating with a degree with students who have only high school. Starting July 2026, programs that do not meet those guidelines would not be eligible for Federal loans, but the concept of holding schools responsible for student loans if students do not repay them did not survive in the bill, luckily.

Other programs that were slated for cuts are still being negotiated between the Senate and House and it seems encouraging that the cuts will not be so drastic. Those include:

- The Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant
- Work study programs
- TRIO opportunity programs
- CCAMPIS grant for childcare costs for student parents