

*Southern Association of
Student Financial Aid Administrators, Inc.
Since 1963*



www.sasfaa.org

November 19, 2009

President

Keith Reeves
Associate Director of Financial Aid
Clemson University
Box 345123, G01 Sikes Hall
Clemson, SC 29634-5123
Tel: 864 656-5085; Fax: 864 656-1831
E-mail: dkr@clemson.edu

Honorable _____
United States Senate
_____ Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

President-Elect

Sandy Neel
Director of Financial Aid
University of Tennessee-Martin
205 Administration Building
Martin, TN 38238
Tel: (731) 881-7044
E-mail: sneel@utm.edu

Dear Senator _____:

On behalf of the Executive Board of the Southern Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (SASFAA), I want to communicate to you our collective concerns regarding the Federal Student Loan Program (Stafford and PLUS).

Past President

Heather Boutell
Director of Financial Aid
Bellarmine University
2001 Newburg Road
Louisville KY 40205
Tel: 502 452-8404; Fax: 502 452-8486
E-mail: hboutell@bellarmine.edu

SASFAA represents nine states in the Southern Region and has over 1200 members. Within our region, we have several hundred institutions who serve hundreds of thousands of students, many who are student loan borrowers. While our membership and schools are located within the Southern region, we have students from every state of the Union. We seek out your support of our requests, which are made on behalf of the students and parents we serve. These students and parents have been well served by not only the institutions and individual professionals, but by Federal Direct Lending Program (FDSLPL) through the Department of Education and by private sector lenders within the Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) also. Furthermore, our students and parents have benefitted by the opportunity to seek out lenders who offer loans with savings and service that aid the borrowers throughout repayment.

Vice President

Kim Jenerette
Director of Financial Aid
Southern Wesleyan University
907 Wesleyan Drive, PO Box 1020
Central, SC 29630
Tel: (864) 644-5504; Fax: (864) 644-5970
E-mail: kjenerette@swu.edu

Treasurer

Jeff Dennis
AVP, Student Financial Services
Southern Wesleyan University
907 Wesleyan Drive, PO Box 1020
Central, SC 29630
Tel: (864) 644-5521; Fax: (864) 644-5970
E-mail: jdennis@swu.edu

Secretary

Brad Barnett
Sr. Associate Director of Financial Aid
James Madison University
800 South Main Street, MSC 3519
Harrisonburg, VA 22807
Tel: 540 568-2894; Fax: 540 568-7994
E-mail: barnetbd@jmu.edu

SASFAA is an advocate for choice within the respective loan programs. As President Obama stated in his address to a Joint Session of Congress on September 9, 2009, "Consumers do better when there is choice and competition." We also want to focus on the timing of all schools currently participating in the FFELP having to switch to the Federal Direct Student Loan Program should the Senate version of H.R. 3221 be enacted. Last week, information from the Department of Education provided to a U.S. Senator showed that 1,990 of the 5,455 schools that participate in federal student loan programs are currently participating in the Direct Loan Program. Therefore, 3,465 colleges and universities across the country, that serve millions of students, are not yet participating in the FDSLPL.

Sponsorship Chair

Dewey Knight
Associate Director, Financial Aid
University of Mississippi
257 Martindale Center; PO Box 1848
University, MS 38677-1848
Tel: (662) 915-1166; Fax: (662) 915-1164
E-mail: rdknight@olemiss.edu

Newsletter Editor

Deborah Clark
Director of Financial Aid
Atlanta Technical College
1560 Metropolitan Parkway
Atlanta, GA 30310
Tel: 404 225-4714; Fax: 404 225-4721
E-mail: dclark@atlantatech.edu

Many elected officials have expressed their concerns regarding the timing of such a transition. Most institutions will begin awarding financial aid packages to traditional students in early spring. In addition to the traditional calendar, some institutions have non-traditional students in year-round programs who borrow student loans throughout the year in what is known as the Borrower-Based Academic Year (BBAY). For these students, loans will be packaged in approximately four weeks, and the precarious status of the legislation may greatly harm these student borrowers. The Secretary's assistant has noted it will take 3-4 months for schools to

Membership Chair

Bryan Erslan
Director of Financial Aid Services
Lincoln Memorial University
6965 Cumberland Gap Pkwy
Harrogate, TN 37752
Tel: (423) 869-6465; Fax: (859) 985-3914
E-mail: Bryan.erslan@lmunet.edu

**2010 Annual Conference ♦ February 21-24 ♦ Louisville Marriott Downtown ♦ Louisville, Kentucky
Alabama ♦ Florida ♦ Georgia ♦ Kentucky ♦ Mississippi ♦ North Carolina ♦ South Carolina ♦ Tennessee ♦ Virginia**

*Southern Association of
Student Financial Aid Administrators, Inc.
Since 1963*

convert their programs. Due to the issues related to the transition to a new program (shortage of staff members, new software systems, lack of training, etc.), we ask that you consider the

dilemma that these students face by the timing of this action and at the very least, delay the implementation of full conversion to FDSLPA to July 1, 2011.

If you choose to move forward with full conversion to FDSLPA but allow for the delayed implementation date, we implore you to support legislation to extend the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act (ECASLA). ECASLA has assured that students have been able to obtain the loan(s) necessary to ensure their educational goals and dreams. This action will ensure that every educational loan borrower will be able to continue to secure the respective loan with no interrupted service.

Lastly, as of the date of this letter, the Senate committee of jurisdiction has not acted on this proposed legislation, as well as the entire Senate or any conferees. This is of major concern to us as the timing of the possible conversion to, and implementation of, 100% FDSLPA is further delayed. The Senate had noted they would vote on H.R. 3221 by October 15, 2009, but as of the date of this letter, proposed legislation still has not reached the Senate for a vote.

With all of the above taken into consideration, it is our collective voice that comes together as one to ask you to allow our student and parent borrowers continued access to their hopes and dreams. The Executive Board of SASFAA, on behalf of our entire membership, urges you to support "choice and competition." But if not, we ask you to implement a reasonable timeframe for transition.

Sincerely,



Keith Reeves
SASFAA President