

February 14, 2006

The following legislative alert was prepared by the Illinois Presidents Council.

ICCTA note:

To send an e-mail, fax or letter to your state legislator in support of the Disadvantaged Student Success Grant, click here:

<http://capwiz.com/we/issues/alert/?alertid=8472536&type=TA>

To read Women's Employed new report on the importance of student support services, click here:

<http://www.womenemployed.org/docs/SupportServicesReport.pdf>

To view the Fact Sheet on Disadvantaged Student Success Grants, click here:

<http://www.communitycolleges.org/SSGfactsheet206.pdf>

To view the news release on Disadvantaged Student Success Grants, click here:

<http://www.communitycolleges.org/SSGrelease21406.pdf>

We are writing to ask that you contact your state legislators about the importance of restoring the Disadvantaged Student Success Grant prior to the Illinois Senate and House appropriations committee hearings on the IBHE budget, Wednesday, February 15 (Senate), and Thursday, February 16 (House). Legislator information is attached. Women Employed will be releasing the attached report, *Investing in Success: Educational Supports for Illinois Community College Students* on Tuesday, February 14. They have prepared a press release (with a quote from the appropriate college president in the targeted media areas), talking points, and a one-pager on the Grant. All these documents are attached and may provide good talking points with legislators. Legislators will want to hear specific information about the impact of the loss of the Grant at your college and what you could do with this funding to provide the support services to help students stay in school.

The attached Excel spreadsheet lists each college and the Senate and/or House Appropriations committee member. If your college doesn't have a committee member, please either call a legislator you know or call the committee chair (Senator Mattie Hunter, chair, Senate Appropriations III Committee, 312-949-1908 or 217-782-5966; and Rep. David Miller, chair, House Higher Education Appropriations Committee, 708-201-8000 or 217-782-8087). Please note that the City Colleges of Chicago (CCC) legislators are listed under the CCC district office location. Individual CCC campuses may choose any of the legislators listed for advocacy contacts.

The IBHE budget currently contains \$3 million for the Grant. We are grateful to see this funding for the Grant, which restores an important program in the community college system that at one time was funded at \$13 million. However, the Presidents' Council and the Illinois Community College Trustees Association have unanimously endorsed a level of \$7.5 million, which is the level that Women Employed is also endorsing. In today's dollars, the FY03 level of \$13 million would be worth \$16 million. Because the IBHE budget will be part of an omnibus budget bill, it's important to ask legislators to bring the importance of funding the Grant at as high a level possible to the attention of their leadership.

Christine J. Sobek, Ed.D.

Chair, Legislative Committee, Illinois Council of Public Community College Presidents