



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CALIFORNIA DESIGNATES FEBRUARY AS FINANCIAL AID AWARENESS MONTH

“This resolution is an important first step in recognizing that we need to do more for our students. The financial status of a student or their family should not be a deterrent to accessing higher education.” – Assemblymember Jose Medina (District 61)

“It is essential that we educate students and their families about the importance of financial aid. We know that often times, financial aid determines whether or not a student can attend college, so we must continue to equip our young people with all the resources available to them.” - Assemblymember Kevin McCarty (District 7)

SACRAMENTO, Calif., Feb. 18, 2021 – The California Student Aid Commission (Commission) applauds Assemblymembers Jose Medina and Kevin McCarty for introducing a resolution declaring February as Financial Aid Awareness Month. This resolution comes at a time when many students across California face great financial uncertainty about their future and educational opportunities due to the ongoing COVID-19 crisis. This resolution sends a clear message to students and families that California recognizes the importance of not only making higher education accessible, but also affordable.

February is recognized nationally as financial aid awareness month, during which educators and advocates encourage students and families to apply for financial aid. February is a critical time for students pursuing higher education in California since the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) and California Dream Act Application (CADAA) state priority deadline is March 2.

California invests over \$2.6 billion each year in state financial aid, including Cal Grants. Despite this significant state investment, many first generation, low-income, and other historically underrepresented student populations do not apply for financial aid, primarily due to confusion surrounding eligibility and the application process itself. Exacerbating the issue, California is seeing significant declines in FAFSA and CADAA submissions compared to previous application cycles, likely a result of the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The Commission is committed to ensuring we connect with as many students as possible to reinforce the importance of applying for financial aid by March 2. For more

information on how to apply for financial aid, please visit our registration page for our [Cash for College webinars](#).

For more information on the resolution, please visit:

https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/billNavClient.xhtml?bill_id=202120220ACR20.

For more information on the California Student Aid Commission, please visit csac.ca.gov and/or follow us on social media via our [LinkTree](#).

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The California Student Aid Commission administers the state's \$2.8 billion portfolio of student financial aid programs and services, including the Cal Grant, the Middle Class Scholarship, and the California Dream Act Application. The Commission serves as a resource for policymakers and the public on college affordability and financing issues, and advocates for policy changes to eliminate cost as a barrier to any qualified California student pursuing a higher education. Visit our website at csac.ca.gov or follow us on Twitter @castudentaid.