



EXECUTIVE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
OFFICE OF MANAGEMENT AND BUDGET
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20503

March 29, 2006
(House)

STATEMENT OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY

H.R. 609 - College Access and Opportunity Act

(Rep. Boehner (R) OH and eight cosponsors)

The Administration strongly supports House passage of H.R. 609, the "College Access and Opportunity Act of 2006," which would reauthorize the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) and make it easier for students to attend college and families to afford college.

The Administration is pleased that a number of the bill's provisions echo proposals the President made in his 2006 and 2007 Budgets, such as year-round Pell Grant availability to give recipients the option to accelerate their studies and promptly complete their education. H.R. 609 also includes a landmark Teacher Incentive Fund that would reward K-12 educators who make outstanding progress in raising student achievement or narrowing the achievement gap.

The Administration understands that the House may consider a floor amendment to H.R. 609 that would move forward on several key components of the President's American Competitiveness Initiative and the President's National Security Language Initiative. The Administration strongly supports House passage of this amendment and will continue to work with Congress to refine these provisions.

The Administration is concerned about provisions in H.R. 609 that would prohibit the Secretary of Education from developing an information system regarding students enrolled in postsecondary education. More discussion is necessary to better understand how such a system could help evaluate educational interventions and improve postsecondary education for students and families.

Finally, several provisions of the proposed legislation raise constitutional concerns, and the Administration looks forward to resolving these concerns through the legislative process. These include certain provisions that require the transmittal of legislative proposals to Congress, in contravention of the Recommendations Clause of the Constitution, and the composition of the advisory board established by section 605. The Administration also looks forward to working with Congress to make further changes to the bill that reflect programmatic reforms identified by the Administration and the President's FY 2007 Budget request.

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