

FCSSGA Legislative Issues: Official Statement of Position 2011-2012



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At the Florida College System Student Government Association Fall Conference 410 students from the 28 member colleges arrived in Altamonte Springs, FL to vote on the Preliminary Issues Packet. Each campus was designated a number of voting delegates based on campus population. There were a total of 221 voting delegates. The vote results are as follows:

- Major Gift Matching Funds Program Reinstatement:
For: 143 Against: 71 No Opinion: 7
- Campus Early Voting Locations:
For: 109 Against: 99 No Opinion: 13
- Removing Barriers and Extending Access to Voting for Students:
For: 132 Against: 70 No Opinion: 17
- Scholars Program:
For: 134 Against: 78 No Opinion: 9
- Veterans in Higher Learning Institutions:
For: 200 Against: 17 No Opinion: 4

I. Major Gift Matching Funds Program Reinstatement

Official Stance

The Florida College System Student Government Association (FCSSGA) officially supports any legislation that would provide for the allocation of dollars to the Major Gift Matching Funds Program. Furthermore, we support any legislation that will reinstate this program. As students representing the Florida College System, we feel that these dollars will help students receive greater financial aid in a time where financial aid resources are scarce. Financial aid is a key element for the ability of students to successfully continue and complete their education. The allocation and reinstatement of this program will benefit students in the Florida College System and the University System.



II. Campus Early Voting Locations

Official Stance

FCSSGA officially supports any legislation that would enable college campuses to be early voting locations. As students representing the Florida College System, we understand the importance of exercising our civic duty. Additionally, we acknowledge that the student vote is traditionally one of the most underrepresented votes. By making college campuses early voting locations we will be increasing student voter turnout. We will also be facilitating access for students to become more civically engaged. There is also an inherent benefit to community members, as our college campuses are located in the community.

III. Removing Barriers and Extending Access to Voting for Students

Official Stance

FCSSGA officially supports any legislation that would increase access for student voting by allowing for same day voter registration, and increasing the number of early voting days. As students representing the Florida College System, we feel that it is important to have a "Voter Friendly" state. As a direct result of cutting the number of early voting days and eliminating same day voter registration, numerous ballots have not been counted in recent elections. This has acted as an additional barrier for students and community members to exercise their civic duty. As we move into the next election year, we feel that it is important to renew our commitment to voters across the state by increasing the number of early voting days and having same day voter registration.

IV. Scholars Program

Official Stance

FCSSGA officially supports any legislation that would create a Scholars Program in the State of Florida. As students representing the Florida College System, we recognize the importance of K-12 education in addition to higher education. A scholars program, as implemented in Indiana, would provide



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7th and 8th grade students the opportunity to commit to a path of good citizenship while ensuring their completion of high school and college. This program will reduce the number of students who withdraw from high school before graduation, decrease drug and alcohol use, and increase the number of low-income students entering institutions of higher learning. As we face the challenges of low completion rates and drug and alcohol abuse among our youth, this program will provide an avenue to keep students engaged and focused.

V. Veterans in Higher Learning Institutions

Official Stance

FCSSGA supports any legislation that would grant in-state tuition to veterans who are attending institutions of higher learning. As students in the Florida College System, we strongly believe that veterans should receive in-state tuition. Veterans in the state of Florida currently are being charged out of state tuition until they have met the state's residency requirement. The G.I. Bill was designed to give our veterans benefits for their service to our country. One of these benefits is scholarship dollars to attend college. Currently, the G.I. Bill only covers the cost of in-state tuition. This places a large financial burden on our veterans who have chosen to come to the state of Florida after their time in the service. FCSSGA is a strong supporter of veteran rights and therefore we believe that veterans should be able to attend college in the state of Florida at the lowest cost even if they are not in-state residents.

For further assistance, please feel free to contact Ruth Virginia Moreno, Director of Legislative Staff, or Sarah Pemberton, FCSSGA President and we would be glad to answer any questions that you may have.

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