

# U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



FIGHTING *for a* **FAIR SHOT** *for* **FAMILIES, KIDS and SENIORS**

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## Higher Education: Stepping Stone to the Middle Class

Senator Casey believes that higher education is a key to long-term economic growth and is often a ticket to the American dream. Anyone with the drive, fortitude, and desire to pursue the opportunities afforded by higher education should be able to realize that dream, regardless of their personal financial situation. Pennsylvania is fortunate to have the most institutions of higher education of any state and the rich diversity and economic advantages that come with them. Senator Casey will do everything he can to ensure that college is accessible and affordable for all students and that Pennsylvania continues to benefit from these institutions.

- Senator Casey led the charge to reauthorize the Perkins Loan program, which expired on September 30, 2015. The **Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act** was officially signed into law on Friday, December 18, 2015, extending the program for another two years. Nearly 40,000 Pennsylvania students throughout the commonwealth depend on these loans to get through college.
- Senator Casey is leading a bipartisan effort in the Senate to renew the **Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act**, which provides millions of community college students nationwide with the training and education necessary for success in high-wage, high-skill, and high-demand career fields like engineering, information technology, and health care. Community colleges and the training and the education they provide are critical in preparing our students for success in the 21st century economy.
- Senator Casey is the author of the **Campus Sexual Violence Elimination (Campus SaVE) Act**, which seeks to address sexual violence on college campuses by improving campus judicial proceedings and requiring colleges and universities to provide clear, concise information to victims about their rights and the resources available to them. It was included as Sec. 304 of the Violence Against Women Reauthorization Act of 2013, which was signed into law on March 7, 2013. The law went into full effect on July 1, 2015.
- Senator Casey introduced the bipartisan **Stopping Unfair Collateral Consequences from Ending Student Success Act (SUCCESS Act)** in the 114th Congress. The SUCCESS Act repeals the section of the Higher Education Act that strips federal financial aid from college students convicted of a drug offense and also removes the question from the federal financial aid form. Students convicted of drug offenses remain subject to criminal penalties for their offenses, but removing the aid disqualification ensures they are not punished twice and can still access federal aid to pay for college and become productive members of society.
- As a lifelong supporter of Pell Grants, Senator Casey is a cosponsor of the **In the Red Act**, which seeks to make college more affordable and strengthen Pell grants. The bill would allow student loan borrowers to refinance their loans at lower rates like families can do with a mortgage. It would ensure that new Pell Grants are adjusted to reflect the rate of inflation. And finally it would make two years of community college free and would cover a large portion of tuition and fees for low-income students who attend a Minority Serving Institution.

- Senator Casey has worked to support students and veterans that have been defrauded by for-profit colleges. He has worked with the Department of Education on loan forgiveness programs and the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure institutions are held accountable.
- Senator Casey supported a provision in the **PATH Act** to make college more affordable for low-to-middle income families by permanently extending and enhancing the American Opportunity Tax Credit, which provides up to a \$2,500 tax credit to offset the cost of college.