

U.S. SENATOR BOB CASEY



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

Higher Education: Stepping Stone to the Middle Class

Senator Casey believes that higher education is a ticket to the American dream and a key to long-term economic growth. 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, as well as 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.

Career and Technical Education

- 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. Legislation that Senator Casey co-authored with Senator Enzi, the **Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act**, was unanimously approved by the Senate HELP Committee on June 26, 2018.

Access and Affordability

- Senator Casey is an original cosponsor of Senator Warren's **Bank on Students Emergency Loan Refinancing Act**. This legislation would help student borrowers manage their debt by allowing them to refinance their student loan debt at the same low interest rates offered to new borrowers in the federal student loan program. With student loan debt reaching over \$1.4 trillion, it is critical that we work not only to reduce the cost of college, but give those students who have already taken out loans a fair shot at repaying them.
- Senator Casey has been a powerful voice in the fight to protect funding for programs that make higher education more affordable and accessible for all students, including the Pell Grant, Trio, campus-based aid, and the Child Care Access Means Parents in School (CCAMPIS) program.
- Students with disabilities are graduating high school and enrolling in college at an all-time high. Preparing every student for college and a career is critically important to supporting a strong economy and prosperous nation. Yet, students with disabilities often face barriers in college that prevent them from truly excelling. That is why Senator Casey introduced the bipartisan **Respond, Innovate, Succeed, and Empower Act of 2017 (RISE Act)** in the 115th Congress. This legislation helps to ease the transition for students with disabilities from high school to college by clarifying the documentation an institution of higher education must accept as proof of a student's disability. It also makes school policies and data more transparent for students and families so they can make informed decisions. Finally, it provides additional support for technical assistance to colleges and universities to better serve individuals with disabilities.

- Senator Casey has worked to ease the financial burden on the families of first responders who fall in the line of duty. Legislation he introduced, the **Children of Fallen Heroes Scholarship Act**, which was signed into law on March 23, 2018, will make the children of fallen first responders who pursue a college education eligible for the maximum Pell Grant.
- Senator Casey introduced the **Correctly Recognizing Educational Achievements to Empower (CREATE) Graduates Act** in the 115th Congress. This legislation will help young people to receive the degrees that they have already earned by creating incentives for states to establish “reverse transfer” programs, or initiatives to transfer back credits from a four-year university to the two-year program where a student without a degree was initially enrolled. It also contains a provision that would make it easier for institutions of higher education to share student records for the purposes of helping them reverse transfer.
- Senator Casey introduced the **Stopping Unfair Collateral Consequences from Ending Student Success Act (SUCCESS Act)** in the 115th 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.
- Senator Casey supported a provision in the **PATH Act** to make college more affordable for working 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.
- 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. Senator Casey is also a cosponsor of the **Federal Perkins Loan Program Extension Act of 2017**, which would extend the program for another two years. Perkins loans allow institutions to fill gaps in student aid with low-interest loans, thereby helping students throughout the Commonwealth and the Nation access higher education.
- Senator Casey introduced the **Higher Education Mental Health Act of 2018**, which would create a commission to make recommendations to universities, states, and the federal government to better support students with mental health disabilities and concerns.
- 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.

Campus Safety

- Senator Casey authored **S. 2530, the Safe Equitable Campus Resources and Education (SECuRE) Act**, to hold colleges and universities accountable for ensuring that the needs of individuals with disabilities are included in planning and prevention efforts with respect to campus sexual assault, and provided accommodations as needed when they are the victim of a sexual assault or when they are involved in a campus conduct proceeding following a sexual assault. This bill follows a landmark report from the National Council on Disability, highlighting the ways in which the needs of individuals with disabilities are being overlooked when addressing campus sexual assault.

- 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.