



## **AACS 2015 HEA Reauthorization August Recess Challenge!**

Attention AACS Members, here's your chance to once again show people in Washington, D.C. just how responsive our community can be when called upon to assist in getting the message out to Members of Congress!

And this time, your GRC is going to try something new, hopefully fun, and yes, even a bit competitive as we call upon you to take the AACS 2015 HEA Reauthorization August Recess Challenge. Find out how below:

### **BACKGROUND**

Given how effective all of you – the AACS membership – were in helping raise Congressional awareness and support for H.R. 970 and S. 559, The Strengthening Academic Freedom Through Regulatory Relief Act, key Education Committee leaders have encouraged AACS to use the August Congressional Recess to focus on yet another targeted advocacy campaign!

As you may recall, back in April and May, the AACS GRC requested that you take immediate steps to contact your elected officials and request that they join with AACS, more than 25 other higher education organizations, and the Task Force on Regulatory Relief in support of legislation to repeal the Department's overly-burdensome and costly Gainful Employment (GE), State Authorization (State Auth.), and Definition of a Credit Hour (Credit Hour) regulations.

Your response to the GRC's request was swift, clear, and overwhelming. In less than six weeks, more than 1,000 AACS members generated in excess of 7,000 total correspondence to no less than 400 of the 535 Members of the U.S. House and Senate!

This outreach to more than three-quarters of the entire Congress played no small part in increasing the number of co-sponsors on both the House and Senate bills, but more importantly helped propel the issue forward and to its inclusion in both the House and Senate Labor, HHS, Education and Related Agencies' Appropriations bills.

Inclusion of the provisions in the Appropriations bills, which technically must be enacted before the end of September but likely will be enacted before the end of the year, provides us with the most expedient path to blocking implementation and enforcement of these overly-burdensome and problematic regulations.

And AACCS continues to work to ensure that these provisions are included in the final compromise legislation, whenever it is completed.

### **CURRENT STATUS**

While we remain focused on successful passage of these stop-gap proposals to prevent the implementation and enforcement of GE, State Auth., and Credit Hour regulations, the opportunity for full and comprehensive relief comes in the form of the inclusion of full repeal of these regulations in the pending Reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

This comprehensive review and evaluation process, which is supposed to take place every five-six years, took ten years to complete last time. And we are already into the seventh year of the current legislation. However, the good news is that both the House and Senate Education Committee leaders have stated that they intend to introduce proposed legislation in early to mid-September, mark-up a comprehensive bill in late September or October, and pursue House and Senate floor consideration before the end of the year.

With all of the hearings complete, and armed with the knowledge that staff will now begin considering all of the proposals that have been circulated and discussed since 2013 – when House Committee Chairman John Kline first requested all institutions of higher education and other interested parties to submit their HEA Reauthorization recommendations – the time has come to remind all the elected officials of AACCS' top legislative goals and objectives.

It is time to once again ask Congress to take **CARE** in contemplating and developing the legislative changes that will help shape the future of higher education policy, student access and eligibility, and institutional eligibility into the next decade, a new Administration, and a period of at least six years and possibly longer.

### **AUGUST RECESS CHALLENGE**

Between now and Congress' return to Washington the day after Labor Day (September 8, 2015), the AACCS GRC is challenging you, your current students and alumni, and your industry partners (both those that help you operate your institution and those who hire your graduates) to contact your elected officials and request their support for the AACCS 2015 HEA Reauthorization CARE Initiative.

As you know, the AACCS CARE Initiative represents the GRC's ongoing, and constantly changing, set of legislative and regulatory priorities on behalf of your students and schools.

First used with considerable success to help drive our 2008 HEA Reauthorization Agenda, CARE, the acronym, and its association with the principles of Choice, Access & Accountability, Regulatory Reform & Relief, and Equity have become synonymous with our community's goals and objectives.

Building on the long-standing familiarity with the CARE Initiative, we are asking that you take immediate steps to contact your elected officials, seeking their support for our comprehensive list of 2015-2016 HEA Reauthorization priorities.

In an effort to expand our influence, we are also requesting that you endeavor to reach out and seek help from your students, alumni, third-party servicers, and employers as we make our final push!

Here is a comprehensive list of ways you can respond to the August Recess Challenge...

**2015 HEA Reauthorization  
August Recess Challenge  
Points Structure**

**Getting Started**

Go to AACSAction.org and Register as an AACCS GRC Activist     2 points per school participant  
(You will automatically complete this task, if/when you submit your Institution's letter(s) to your elected officials!)

Bookmark the AACCS GRC Website on your computer     2 points per institution  
(You are on the honor system here, but this is vitally important, because once Congress returns from the August Recess we are going to need you to regularly check the site for the latest information, surveys, and reactions to proposed HEA provisions, and likely additional calls to action!)

**Generating Letters to Your Elected Officials**

Submit Your Institution's Letters to Your Elected Officials     5 points per letter per participant  
(Simply go to AACSAction.org and click on any one of the August Recess Challenge tabs!)

Student and Alumni Submission of Letters     10 points per letter per participant  
(Direct them to AACSAction.org, the August Recess Challenge tab, and the pre-constructed Student and Alumni Letter – all they have to do is fill in a couple of pieces of information within the letter and hit send!)

Third-Party Servicer Submission of Letters     15 points per letter per participant  
(Direct them to AACSAction.org, the August Recess Challenge tab, and the pre-constructed Third-Party Servicer Letter – all they have to do is fill in a couple of pieces of information within the letter and hit send!)

Employer Submission of Letters     20 points per letter per participant  
(Direct them to AACSAction.org, the August Recess Challenge tab, and the pre-constructed Employer Letter – all they have to do is fill in a couple of pieces of information within the letter and hit send!)

**Attending Elected Officials Events**

Town Hall or Other Free Event     20 points per attendee per event

Fundraiser     1 point per \$ contributed

(The easiest way to determine which events are taking place for your elected officials is by simply going to their official State/District website and reviewing their calendar. If you have any problems finding their calendar, the next best option is to use the "Contact Us" information on their website to call or email the State/District office requesting the information.)

### **School Visits**

Invite Your Elected Official(s)/Staff To: 10 points per invitation  
    Visit Your Institution(s) Over the August Recess  
    Attend a Charity Event at Your Institution(s)  
    Attend/Speak at Your Institution(s) Graduation Ceremony

Hosting Your Elected Official(s)/Staff: 100 points per visit

(Once again the "Contact Us" portion of the elected official's website should be used to call your elected official's State/District office, ask to speak with his/her scheduler, and attempt to set a date and time for a school visit.)

### **Tracking Your Success**

AACS will be able to track the submission of all letters through the AACSAction.org website.

If and when you attend an event or fundraiser or have made direct contact with one or more of your Senator's and/or Representative's offices to invite them to visit your institution, please notify both AACS Public Policy Advisor, Tom Netting at [Tom.Netting@akerman.com](mailto:Tom.Netting@akerman.com) and AACS State Relations Liaison, Brian Newman at [Brian.Carl.Newman@gmail.com](mailto:Brian.Carl.Newman@gmail.com).

Also, if possible, when attending events with your Senators or Representatives, obtain a picture of you with your elected official(s) and send it to us so that we can share it with the AACS Membership and post it on the AACSAction.org website!

### **What You Get For Participating**

While the final determinations have not been made, the GRC will, at a minimum, be awarding "Certificates of Recognition & Appreciation" to everyone who participates in each class of participants, including:

- ✓ AACS Member Institutions;
- ✓ AACS Member Students and Alumni;
- ✓ AACS Member Institution Third-Party Servicers; and
- ✓ AACS Member Institution Employers.

The GRC will definitely be giving out additional prizes for the top overall points leaders, and may also be giving out prizes for the top performers in the individual categories!

Our initial view is that this can/should be an individual institution-by-institution challenge - hopefully sparking some healthy internal competition between larger chain-schools (e.g. Aveda, Empire, Marinello, JP Mitchell Systems, and Tony & Guy), while at the same time recognizing the strength of a single, sole proprietor's impact in advocating for our students and schools!

And we will not forget about the most active Third-Party Servicers and Employers too!

### **Who Is the Biggest Winner?**

Frankly, we all will be! Your efforts, and those of all of the various members of the beauty and wellness community working together will help to ensure our collective futures!