

Exhibit 13

Information/Action Item

Consideration of the Commission's policy on travel to Washington, D.C.

Background

The California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) does not have a formal policy about making lobbying trips to Washington, D.C.

As discussed in Exhibit 13.1, Chair Geiogue is currently operating under the approach that the CSAC would only make lobbying trips to Washington, D.C. if there is a major financial aid issue to address or if our physical presence is required. If there is a justified need for such a trip, there should be a focused plan and a goal i.e., something the commission wants to achieve.

Commissioner Conley requested that this issue be added to the June agenda for discussion and action if appropriate.

Commissioner Conley has proposed that the CSAC establish a separate committee "comprised of two commissioners and one staff member that will make an annual trip to Washington, D.C., to address current student aid issues that affect post-secondary California students and influence the broader topic of national student aid."

Responsible Person(s): Hal Geiogue, Chair
Ed Emerson, Chief
Strategic Policy, Media and Communications Division

CSAC travel to Washington D.C.

When taking office in January 2015, Chair Geiogue found that the California Student Aid Commission (CSAC) did not have a formal policy about Commissioners and/or staff traveling to Washington D.C. In the past, such trips had only been authorized from time to time on an ad hoc basis as decided upon by the Chair and the Executive Director.

Given this situation, Chair Geiogue consulted with the CSAC staff, the Chair of the Legislative, Audit and Budget (LAB) Committee and a few other Commissioners (within the restrictions of Bagley-Keene) to see what approach to Washington D.C. travel is currently appropriate. Based on this consultation, he concluded that under the authority of the Chair as expressed in the Commission's Governance Policies and Procedures, he would only authorize such travel if there is a major national financial aid issue to address or if our physical presence is formally requested by Congress and/or the Administration.

This conclusion was based on the fact that the CSAC staff works to coordinate its activities with public and private institutions of higher learning, along with various state and national associations and financial assistance experts who stay on top of trends and issues that relate to financial aid. If a major problem or issue arises, staff knows about it and informs the Commission. If there is concern about a federal issue, there are normal channels within which the CSAC can make its views known. Conversely, if staff and elected officials in other states or in Washington D.C. seek financial aid information from us, we are always willing to help and inform them.

This approach also recognizes that in some circumstances travel to Washington D.C. might be justified. If the Commission, working through the LAB Committee, decided that the best option to deal with a financial aid issue of significant importance to California justified a lobbying trip to Washington D.C., then our representatives would be appointed, an agenda developed and appointments set up. The cost of such travel is also an important consideration. It would be weighed against the purpose, justification and benefit of each trip.

In summary, currently CSAC Commissioners and/or staff would only travel to Washington DC if there is a major issue to address or if its physical presence is required. If there is such a justified need to go, there should be a focused plan, and a goal i.e., something the Commission wants to achieve.