



The Role of the President in Federal Advocacy

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Tim Powers, Vice President for Government Relations, NAICU

James Troha, President, Juniata College

December 4, 2025

Agenda

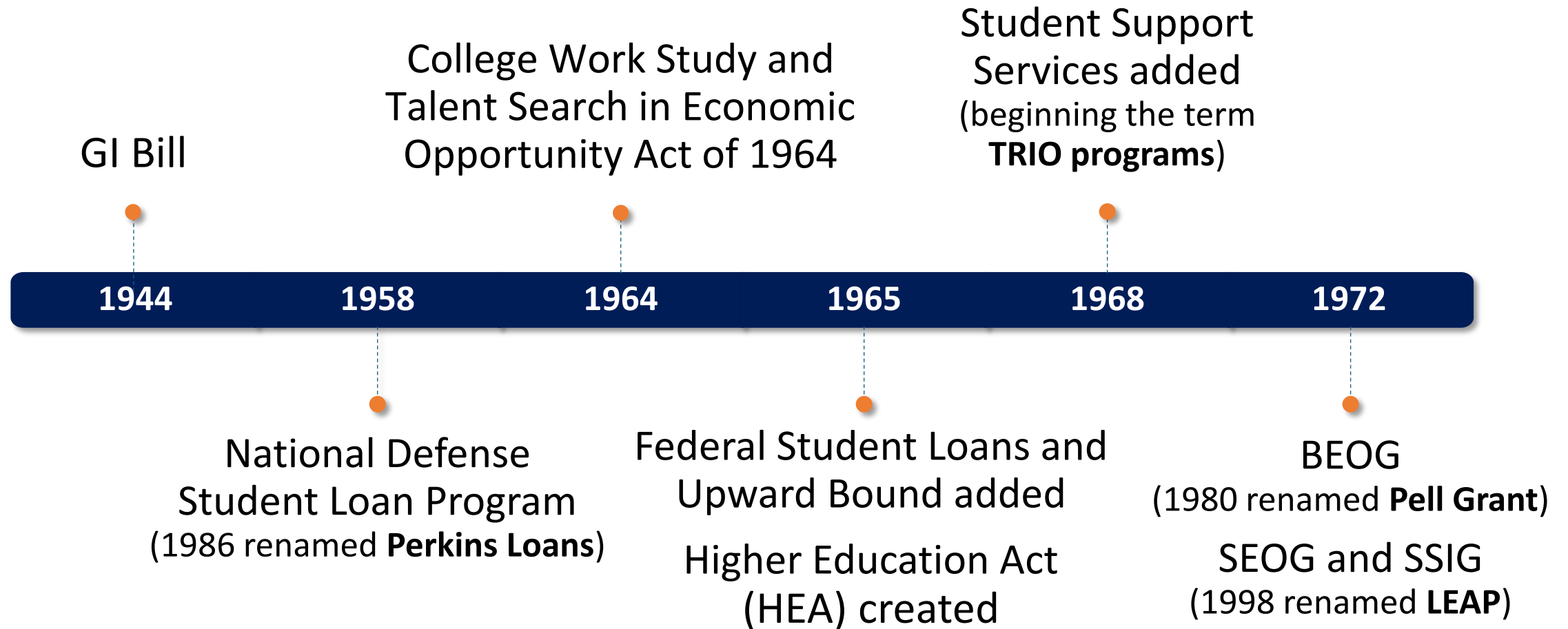
- President as Advocate: Why it Matters
- Your Partnership with NAICU
- Presidential Engagement with President James Troha, Juniata College
- Overview of Policy Issues
- Advocacy in Action
- Questions



President as Advocate: Why It Matters

Barbara Mistick, President, NAICU

Federal Support for Higher Education



Congress is Your Biggest Donor

**Independent Sector Federal
Student Aid Total
\$38,520,346,583**

**Pell Grants
\$4,791,970,751**

**Campus-Based Programs
\$781,814,900**

**Student Loans
\$32,946,560,932**

Student Aid Funding: Juniata College

Juniata College

January 2025

Representative John Joyce
Congressional District 13 Pennsylvania

In the most recent federal budget, \$130 billion was provided to support students via federal student aid programs. Below is a summary of federal grant aid, work study, and loans that helped students attend your institution. Federal student aid is a top priority for NAICU.

<i>2023-24 Federal Pell Grants</i>	Awards	Amount
Pell Grants	352	\$1,898,156
<i>2022-23 Campus-Based Programs</i>		
Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant (FSEOG)	164	\$169,047
Federal Work Study	231	\$217,852
<i>2023-24 Federal Student Loans</i>		
	Loans	Volume
Subsidized	644	\$2,735,727
Unsubsidized	751	\$2,449,847
PLUS	128	\$2,162,190
Grad PLUS	3	\$32,890
Grad Unsubsidized	34	\$373,793

New Framework for Tax Benefits for Families & Students



Savings Bonds (1989)



Save for College

Section 529 (**1996**)
Coverdell Education
Savings Accounts
(ESAs) (**1997**)



Paying for College

Congress switches to
Direct Lending (**2009**)
American Opportunity
Tax Credit (AOTC)
(**1996/2009**)
Lifetime Learning Tax
Credit (**1996**)
Section 127 (**1978**)



Repaying Student Loans

Student Loan Interest
Deduction (SLID) (**1997**)
Section 127 (**2020-2025**)

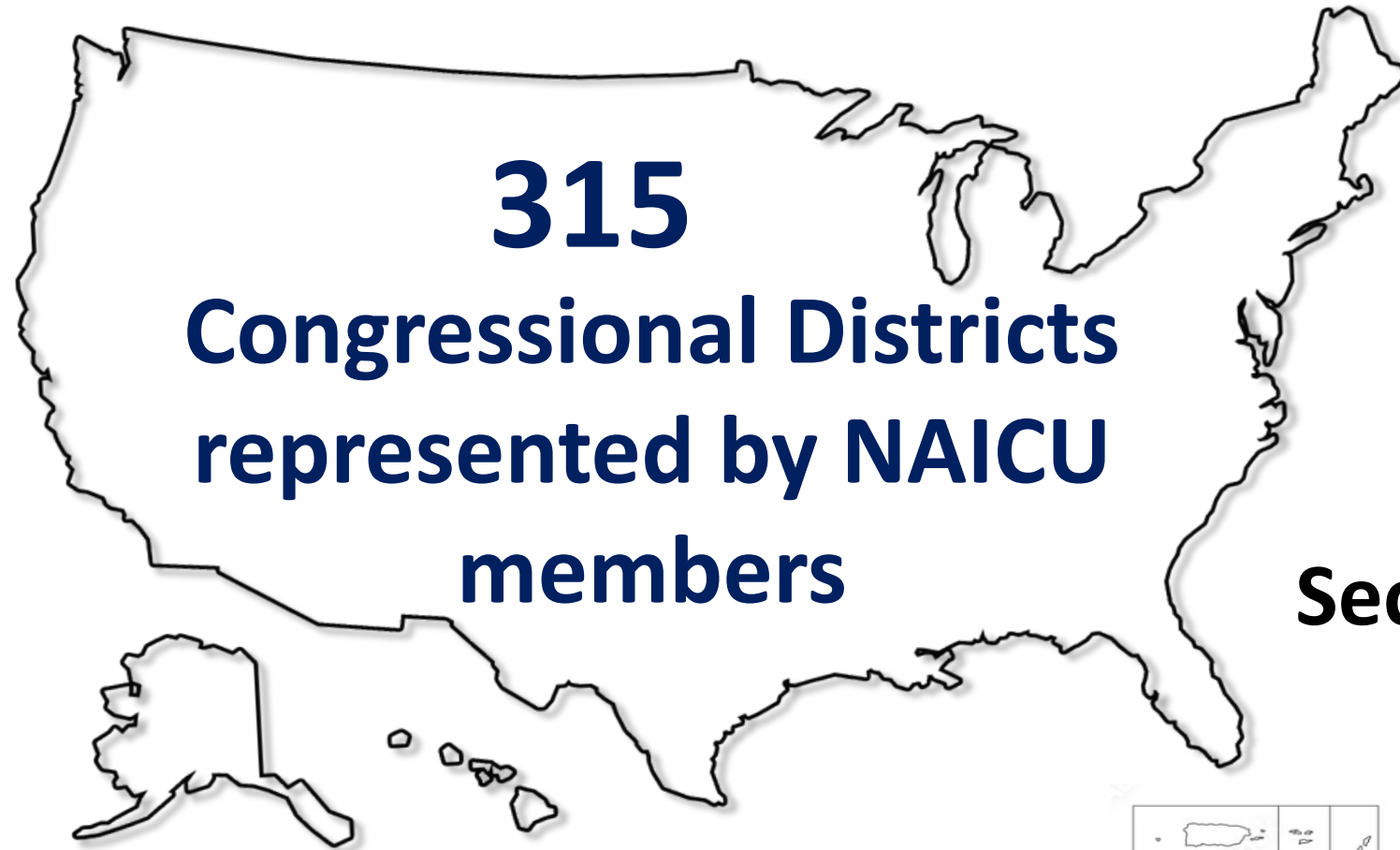


Your Partnership with NAICU

Barbara Mistick, President, NAICU

National Network

NAICUSE



Secretariat



How NAICU Activates Our Network



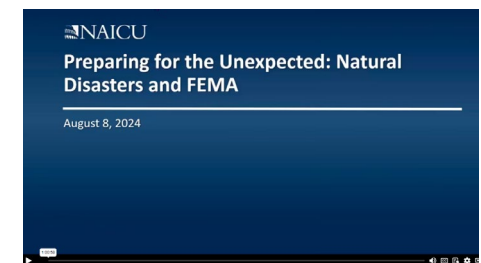
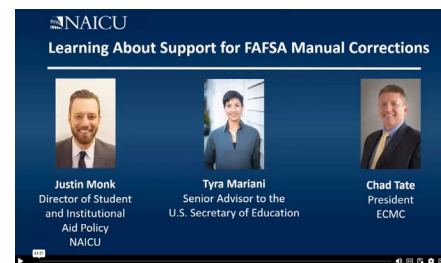
Washington Update: Weekly newsletter with news on federal issues affecting private, nonprofit higher ed



Action Alerts: When member engagement is urgently needed to reach congress or the administration; include tailored letters, talking points, messaging, etc.



Presidents' Network / other tools: Timely communications, webinars, and resources to keep member presidents and other campus constituencies up-to-date on key issues



Advocacy Mindset



Cultivate an advocacy mindset on behalf of your institution and our sector with elected officials





Presidential Engagement

James Troha, President, Juniata College



Overview of Policy Issues

Tim Powers, Vice President for Government Relations, NAICU

Core Policy Focus



Strengthening institutions, protecting the independence of private, nonprofit institutions, ensuring equitable treatment for our sector, and accessing direct institutional support when appropriate.



Ensuring student aid programs continue to provide all Americans with access to the college of their choice.



Seeking appropriate regulation of private colleges and universities that is sensitive to their diversity and independence while addressing society's needs.



Promoting tax policy that encourages families to save and pay for college, while also helping private, nonprofit colleges fulfill their distinctive missions.

Key Issues This Fall: Congress



- Annual federal student aid funding—particularly protecting Federal Work-Study and SEOG and expanding Pell Grants
- Fighting the reductions to graduate lending and other problematic ideas included in the final reconciliation bill

Key Issues This Fall: Executive Branch

- Implementation of the *One Big Beautiful Bill Act* (OB3)
- Execution of enhanced admissions and enrollment requirements
- Proposals/proclamations affecting international students and faculty
- Implementation of DEI, civil rights, and other executive orders
- Opportunities to reform financial responsibility standards, board governance policies, etc.



Key Issues This Fall: OB3 Implementation

***One Big Beautiful Bill Act* signed into law on July 4 contains several higher education policy changes**

- Termination of Grad PLUS on July 1, 2026 for new students
- New loan caps for "professional" (\$50k annually/\$200k aggregate), non-professional grad programs (\$20.5k annually/\$100k aggregate)
- New workforce Pell program, accountability mechanism, minor changes to Pell Grants
- Reformed endowment tax

Focus turns to implementation

- RISE Committee met for two weeks in October and November, reached consensus on regulatory package related to changes to lending programs
- AHEAD Committee will convene in December & January to discuss accountability + Pell

Next Steps: Congress

With hardline stance taken by ED on graduate loans and "professional" program definition, next step will be to engage Congress.

NAICU will provide legislative strategy and roadmap

- Goal: Leverage presidents, NAICU State Executive network, government relations professionals to build pressure to reform unintended consequences of *OBBBA*
- Advocate forcefully for federal funding, other federal priorities

Key opportunity: NAICU Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day (February 1-4, 2026)

Annual Meeting & Advocacy Day Primer

First time joining us? We recommend:

1. Attend **Government Relations Academy**
Sunday, February 1, 2-5:30 pm
2. Attend **Tell Your Story: Successful Advocacy on the Hill**
Monday, February 2, 4:45-5:30 pm
3. Connect with your **State Association** and **Delegation**
4. Meet with your MOC during **Advocacy Day**
Tuesday, February 3, 10:30 am-5:00 pm
5. Attend the **Congressional Reception for the Independent Colleges Caucus**
Tuesday, February 3, 5-6:30 pm
6. Follow-up: **Invite your MOC to campus**



50 YEARS OF IMPACT
Charting the Future of Independent Higher Education

**2026 Annual Meeting
& Advocacy Day**

Join us in Washington, DC for the premier policy and advocacy event for presidents and other senior leaders.

**February
1-4, 2026**



Advocacy in Action

Engaging Elected Officials

How to talk with a legislator

- Relax: Legislators, and their staff, are people, too.
- Make it real: Introduce your institution and tell your story.
- Be direct: Ask the question, “can you support our students by voting for/against a bill or funding?”
- Don’t speculate.
- Listen and be fair and unbiased.
- Be yourself.

Types of meetings

- On-boarding
- Home – on campus
- Away – Washington D.C.
- State Association
- NAICU Advocacy Day

What You Can Do

1.

**Know your
story**

2.

**Advocate within
your networks**

3.

**Engage your
Members of
Congress**



Questions
