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Student Government Association

5-2021

S.Proc.2021.24 Save EASE Act

Rollins College Student Government Association

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Save EASE Act

S.Proc.2021.24

Sponsored by: Katelynn McAraw, Lia Morilla, and Zoe Pearson
on behalf of Vice President Daniel Elliott

IN THE SENATE OF THE STUDENT GOVERNMENT
ASSOCIATION OF ROLLINS COLLEGE

4/14/2021

A Resolution

Advocating for full funding for the Effective Access to Student Education Grant by the Florida
Legislature.

***WHEREAS** nearly half of the student body at Rollins College is comprised of in-state, Florida residents;*

***WHEREAS** many students depend on EASE Grant funding to attend Rollins;*

***WHEREAS** cutting funding to the EASE Grant disproportionately affects students of color and students of low-income backgrounds;*

***WHEREAS** almost all currently-eligible students at Rollins will lose eligibility to the EASE Grant under the current provisions of bills under consideration in the Florida House of Representatives: Now, therefore,*

Be it Hereby Resolved, the Student Government Association of Rollins College will:

(1) Send the following letter to State Representative Anna Eskamani and State Senator Linda Stewart:

Dear Representative Anna Eskamani/Senator Linda Stewart,

The Effective Access to Student Education (EASE) grant program has been critical to furthering the education of countless students at Rollins College. EASE provides tuition assistance to students like ours who attend independent colleges and universities in Florida.

As the Legislature considers the budget for this year, please support and fund EASE to ensure our students and the other 46,000 students who receive EASE assistance can continue their education.

Floridians have suffered greatly during COVID-19 and the resulting economic downturn. Cuts to EASE during COVID-19 would burden Florida's already struggling families by forcing students to abandon their education or significantly increase the debt they will owe after graduation. Florida's student loan debt hit \$75.9 billion in 2019.

Improving access to college is key to Florida's economic recovery from COVID-19 and future prosperity. In fact, 58% of Floridians experienced job loss, pay cuts or a reduction of hours due to COVID-19, and more than one-third of residents believe they'll need additional training or education to find work at the same pay level. 67% of new Florida jobs by 2025 will require some form of higher education.

Florida's independent colleges and universities, like Rollins College, where we attend, are engines of opportunity for Floridians, especially in your district that includes Winter Park. These institutions accept more minority students, more low-income students, and more students over 25 than the State University System, and EASE helps them pay for their tuition. Half of the students attending Florida's independent colleges and universities are racial minorities, half come from families making an income less than \$60,000 annually, and nearly one-third are over the age of 25. These students are adults, parents, veterans and full-time workers who are looking to further their careers by pursuing higher education.

While Florida's independent colleges and universities accept more low-income students, they also produce higher starting salaries. With EASE, students can effectively break barriers to higher incomes. Of the top seven higher education institutions in Florida based on graduates' average starting salary, six of them are independent colleges and universities.

We recognize that our state legislators will be facing some tough budget decisions this year. As you consider the budget, please keep in mind how vital the EASE voucher is for our students and the 46,000 others who depend on it. Your support for EASE gives us a brighter future.

Sincerely,

Manny Rodriguez
President
Rollins College Student Government Assn.
On behalf of the Executive Board

Daniel Elliott
Vice President & President-Elect
Rollins College Student Government Assn.
On behalf of the Senate of SGA

(2) Send the following letter to State Representatives Michelle Salzman, Alex Andrade, Jay

Williamson, Patt Maney, Brad Drake, Jay Trumbull, Jason Shoaf, Ramon Alexander,

Allison Tant, Chuck Brannan, Yvonne Hinson, Chuck Clemons, Joe Harding, Stan

McClain, Paul Renner, Tom Leek, Webster Barnaby, David Smith, Scott Plakon, Joy

Goff-Marcil, Kamia Brown, Tray McCurdy, Daisy Morales, Carlos Guillermo Smith, and

*Rene Plasencia; and State Senators Doug Broxton, George Gainer, Lorraine Ausley,
Jennifer Bradley, Keith Perry, Jason Brodeur, Randolph Bracy, and Victor Torres:*

Dear Representative/Senator [First Name, Last Name],

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