



NEWS

From the Illinois Senate

State Senator Dave Koehler

For immediate release

October 15, 2009

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Koehler Sponsors Measure to Restore MAP Grant Funding

SPRINGFIELD, IL—Today, the Illinois Senate voted to authorize the governor to restore funding to the popular Monetary Award Program (MAP), which offers need-based grants to help undergraduates afford college.

“I’ve heard from hundreds of students and their families about the importance of MAP grants,” said State Sen. Dave Koehler (D-Peoria), a co-sponsor of the legislation. “They see a college diploma as the key to landing a stable job with decent pay. In these times of economic uncertainty, we can’t take that opportunity away from them.”

MAP grants help students who have already maxed out all other resources for paying college make up the difference. Most students who rely on MAP grants already have jobs and substantial student loans. The up to \$4,968 provided by the State is often the difference between graduating and dropping out for financial reasons.

“Nearly 3,000 students from my district rely on MAP grants—as do local colleges and universities,” noted Koehler. “Bradley University alone receives more than \$6 million to help financially needy students attend college. Without MAP grants, many students would have to give up their dreams of a better future, and many colleges and universities would face even more crippling budget deficits.”

The General Assembly is restoring MAP grant funding by explicitly authorizing the governor to use part of his more than \$1 billion contingency fund to pay for the program. Earlier this year, the General Assembly gave the governor unusually wide discretionary spending authority to help cope with Illinois’ unprecedented budget deficit. Senate Bill 1180 allocates an additional \$205 million from the governor’s discretionary funds to the Illinois Student Assistance Commission, which administers MAP grants.

“This is only a temporary solution,” Koehler admitted. “Earlier this year, I voted for a responsible budget plan that would have balanced budget cuts and revenue increases to ensure vital programs like MAP grants received the funding they need. My number one priority next year is making sure the State finds a reasonable, responsible way to balance its budget.”

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