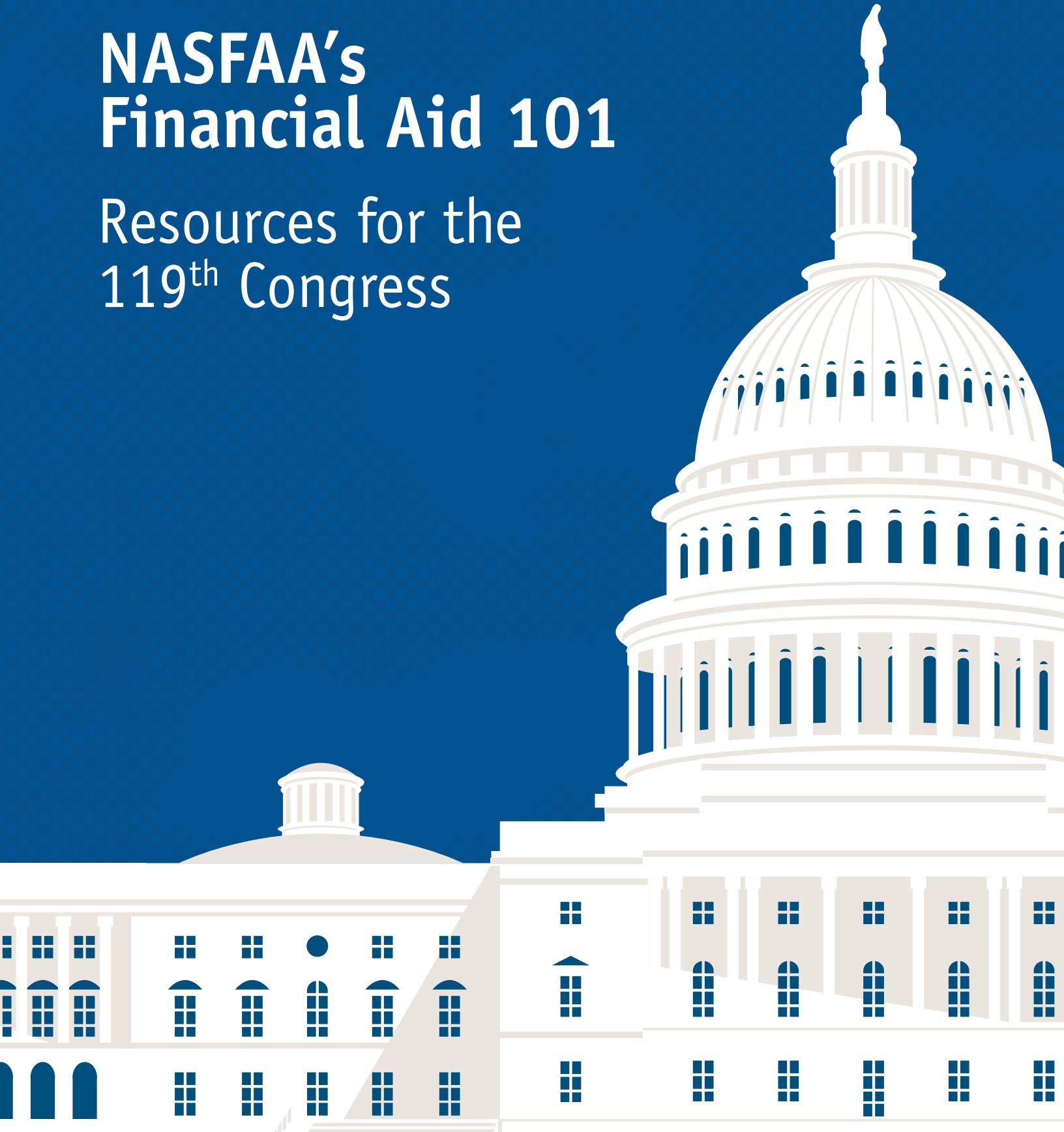




# NASFAA's Financial Aid 101

Resources for the  
119<sup>th</sup> Congress



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## Who Is NASFAA?

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The National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators (NASFAA) is the only national, nonprofit association with a primary focus on information dissemination, professional development, and legislative and regulatory analysis related to federal student aid programs. Our membership consists of more than 29,000 student financial assistance professionals at nearly 3,000 colleges, universities, and career schools across the country. NASFAA member institutions serve nine out of every 10 undergraduates in the United States. NASFAA is a nonpartisan organization that advocates for public policies that increase student access to and success in postsecondary education, most often in the context of Higher Education Act reauthorization and the budget and appropriations process.

The importance of investing in and strengthening our nation's postsecondary education system has never been more critical. Concerns over college access, affordability, and transparency are colliding with the growing demand in the workforce for college educated individuals, all while disparities in college access and attainment are becoming more stark than ever. As the 119th Congress begins, lawmakers have an opportunity to re-evaluate our country's higher education policies and take action to ensure an affordable college education is within reach for all students. Robust, streamlined student aid policy must play a central role in this effort. To that end, NASFAA offers the resources below to assist members of the 119th Congress as they work to pass reform that will strengthen access to, and success in, higher education for our nation's students.

NASFAA is available to provide feedback, technical assistance, and financial aid expertise to assist in your office's work. Upon request, NASFAA is also able to provide congressional staff with access to member-only resources such as Today's News, a daily newsletter covering timely updates in student aid legislation and the latest news, events, and trends in higher education. Please email [policy@nasfaa.org](mailto:policy@nasfaa.org) to connect with NASFAA's policy team and learn about our additional resources.

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## Resource #1 | Timely Higher Education Act Reauthorization Topics

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- [NASFAA's Reauthorization Recommendations](#)  
NASFAA's top priorities, organized by topic, to modernize and reauthorize the Higher Education Act (HEA) so that it meets the needs of today's students and institutions.
- [Higher Education Act Reauthorization Web Center](#)  
An in-depth look into NASFAA's comments, analysis, and previous work as it relates to HEA reauthorization, including our HEA recommendations and summaries of reauthorization proposals introduced in previous congressional sessions.
- [Issue Briefs](#)  
Focused on timely federal student aid policy issues, NASFAA's issue briefs provide background and recommendations for lawmakers.

## Resource #2 | Key Financial Aid Issues to Watch

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- **FAFSA Simplification**

Significant changes to federal student aid policy, including simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), were attached to the FAFSA Simplification Act that became law in December 2020. This web center compiles resources related to these changes and their implementation, including summaries of changes to Federal Methodology, case studies, implementation checklists for schools, and NASFAA's FAFSA simplification news coverage.

- **Negotiated Rulemaking**

Negotiated Rulemaking (Neg Reg) is a process used by the U.S. Department of Education (ED) where stakeholders negotiate the terms of proposed rules. Recent rulemaking sessions focused on student loan debt relief and program integrity & institutional quality. This web center compiles NASFAA's coverage of negotiated rulemaking, proposed rules and NASFAA's comments, and final rules.

- **"Off The Cuff" Podcast**

NASFAA's policy-focused podcast provides listeners with an unscripted view of hot financial aid and higher education-related topics.

- **Endorsed Legislation**

NASFAA regularly engages with policymakers to promote our legislative and regulatory priorities. Our advocacy efforts include proactive outreach to congressional and administrative staff to share NASFAA's positions on important issues in postsecondary student aid.

- **Improving Financial Aid Offers**

In recent years, policymakers have taken a closer look at financial aid offers. NASFAA values the importance of clear, concise, accurate information for students and parents, and recognizes there are ways to improve aid offers. As such, NASFAA has continued work to improve aid offers over the past several years, including consumer testing and updating NASFAA's Code of Conduct. This web center contains NASFAA's aid offer resources, including financial aid offer models, a glossary of terms, an aid offer comparison tool for students and parents, and relevant research. Most recently, NASFAA, along with several other higher education associations, launched the College Cost Transparency Initiative (<https://www.collegeprice.org/home>), which put forth a voluntary set of standards and principles financial aid offices can use when developing aid offers. As of December 2024, nearly 650 schools representing over 6.4 million students have signed as partners to this initiative.

- **Prison Education Programs**

Incarcerated individuals, on July 1, 2023, became eligible to receive Pell Grants if enrolled in an eligible Prison Education Program (PEP). This web center highlights regularly updated resources, training, and news related to the implementation of federal financial aid in carceral settings.

## Resource #3 | Financial Aid Basics

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- **[Legislative Tracker](#)**

Updated regularly, the tracker provides a comprehensive look at higher education legislation introduced in both the House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate during the current and previous sessions of Congress, breaking down legislation by issue area in order to find the topics or federal programs that are the most relevant to your work.

- **[National Student Aid Profile](#)**

The National Student Aid Profile provides a high-level overview about the federal student financial aid programs that are authorized under Title IV of the HEA. Updated annually, the Profile includes both national and state-level data for each Title IV program, including number of recipients, total volume of awards, and the distribution by family income.

- **[Student Aid Reference Desk](#)**

The “Ref Desk” compiles resources related to the administration of student aid programs with direct links to federal regulation, legislative text, ED guidance, as well as interpretation & analysis from policy organizations, institutions, researchers, and groups focused on student access and success in higher education. It’s easily searchable and provides continuously updated expert data straight from the source.

## Resource #4 | NASFAA Research & Reports

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- **[Report: Protecting Borrowers & Advancing Equity](#)**

Published in May 2022, this NASFAA report aims to fill the gaps in the conversation around student debt by providing systemic and targeted policy solutions to address underlying flaws in the student loan repayment system that lead borrowers into financial hardship. In all, the report outlines recommendations to improve student loan servicing practices, rethink the terms and conditions of student loan repayment, and reform student loan default.

- **[Policy Task Forces and Reports](#)**

NASFAA frequently convenes policy task forces and working groups to review and examine legislative and policy proposals within our key policy areas. Composed of geographically diverse groups of NASFAA members with experience in various postsecondary institutions and sectors, these groups publish reports with findings and recommendations from their work.

- **[Original Research - Highlighted Projects](#)**

An overview of research and grant projects NASFAA has done in collaboration with other stakeholders to address pertinent issues in higher education.



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