

Lt. Governor Simon: College Affordability is Key

Written by Kara Beach

Tuesday, 11 December 2012 16:15

Final Affordability Summit to be held at Northeastern Illinois

CHICAGO – Lt. Governor Sheila Simon will convene her final College Affordability Summit on Wednesday at Northeastern Illinois University. Throughout the fall, Simon has met with students, faculty, staff and administrators at each public university campus in Illinois to urge state, federal and higher education leaders to keep college affordable for all students.

Simon says that transparency is key to helping students afford and complete college. She is backing legislation requiring all degree-granting institutions to publish an annual College Choice Report. The report would help students compare information, such as total costs and completion rates, across all degree-granting institutions in the state and make wise choices about where to spend their college dollars. Each of the 12 public university presidents recently signed a letter of support to House Speaker Mike Madigan, requesting the bill's release from the House Rules Committee.

An October report from the College Board indicates that public and private universities nationwide have increased costs more than 4 percent this school year, with community college costs up 5 percent. To make ends meet, students have taken on more debt, carrying an average of \$26,682 in student loans in 2010 according to the Pew Research Center.

“As a state, we want to increase the proportion of working-age adults with a college degree or credential to 60 percent, up from 41 percent, by 2025. The only way we can achieve this goal is if college is affordable,” said Simon, a former Southern Illinois University law professor and a member of a state task force evaluating MAP Grant eligibility. “We must work together to rein in the costs of higher education.”

DATE: Wednesday, December 12

TIME: 10:15 a.m.

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PLACE: Golden Eagle room, Northeastern Illinois University Student Union, 5500 St. Louis Ave., Chicago

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