

08/08/2003


(original message posted via email)

#### HEROES Bill Ready for President's Signature

On July 31, the Senate passed H.R. 1412, the Higher Education Relief Opportunities for Students (HEROES) Act of 2003. The bill passed the House of Representatives on April 1 and it is now ready for the President's signature.

The measure authorizes the Secretary of Education to waive or modify Title IV student aid requirements as deemed necessary, with respect to an affected individual who:

- (1) is serving on active duty during a war or other military operation or national emergency;
- (2) is performing qualifying National Guard duty during a war, operation, or emergency;
- (3) resides or is employed in an area that is declared a disaster area by any Federal, State, or local official in connection with a national emergency; or
- (4) suffered direct economic hardship as a direct result of a war or other military operation or national emergency.

 A press release dated August 4, 2003 from The Committee on Education and the Workforce (<http://edworkforce.house.gov/press/press108/08aug/heroesps080403.htm>) commended the Senate passage of the bill. "Many of the men and women serving in the Persian Gulf conflict are U.S. military reservists who are college and university students participating in federal financial aid programs. The HEROES legislation extends waiver authority that allows the U.S. Secretary of Education to excuse such military personnel from their federal student loan obligations while they are on active duty. For example, the families of military reservists who left their jobs when called to active duty could be relieved from making student loan payments during the time of service, and the families of borrowers serving on active duty could be given relief from collection calls from lenders while the conflict is taking place."

#### Rule Change Would Let Students Go Online to Approve Release of Personal Data (The Chronicle of Higher Education)

"In a nod to the ubiquity of electronic transactions, the U.S. Department of Education is proposing to reinterpret a privacy law that bars a college from releasing a student's transcripts and other personal data without the student's handwritten signature. Under the proposal, students could agree online to the release of their data," reports The Chronicle of Higher Education. "But as far as some institutions are concerned, the department is playing catch-up: Those colleges already let students go online to authorize the release of documents."

You can view the Department of Education's July NPRM concerning the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) at <http://www.ifap.ed.gov/fregisters/FR0728200304.html>. The complete August 6 article is available at The Chronicle of Higher Education (<http://chronicle.com/daily/2003/08/2003080601t.htm>). Please note that you may be required to be a member of this organization and provide a username and password before accessing the article.