



PRESS RELEASE
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Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights Releases Report on Equal Access to Post-Secondary Education

The Illinois Advisory Committee to the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights released a report, *[Examining Equal Access to Post-Secondary Education in Illinois](#)*, following a series of web hearings. During this study, the Committee heard testimony and received written statements from individuals with insight on barriers to post-secondary access such as academics, advocates, administrators, and government officials.

Through the testimony they received, the Committee identified concerns and highlighted recommendations for the Commission's consideration. In particular, the Committee identified: (i) affordability as a primary barrier to access that disproportionately impacts low-income, Black, and Latinx students; (ii) religious accommodation remains a challenge for some students; (iii) placement in remedial coursework delays college completion; (iv) for-profit colleges use predatory practices and target low-income, Black, and Brown students; and (v) legacy admission practices reinforce disparities between various student groups.

The recommendations noted in the report are directed to the Commission asking for corrective actions from stakeholders including the U.S. Congress, the Illinois Legislature, the Illinois State Board of Education with a goal of helping address the Committee's concerns. In addition, the Committee extends a consideration for action directed to colleges and universities regarding legacy status practices.

Illinois Advisory Committee Vice Chair, Cindy Buys said: "Before the COVID-19 pandemic, there were concerns about equal access to education for students, but the pandemic increased those concerns and revealed new or heightened discrepancies among different populations. The Committee is pleased to have the opportunity to study access to post-secondary education, to identify barriers, and to brainstorm better ways of addressing the problem. We are very thankful to all the experts who shared their knowledge and experience and worked with us to devise potential solutions so that everyone has the opportunity to pursue their full potential. We hope that many of the recommendations from our report will be adopted."

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The U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, established by the Civil Rights Act of 1957, is the only independent, bipartisan agency charged with advising the President and Congress on civil rights and reporting annually on federal civil rights enforcement. Our 51 state Advisory Committees offer a broad perspective on civil rights concerns at state and local levels. For information about the Commission, please visit www.usccr.gov and follow us on [Twitter](#) and [Facebook](#).