



The International Education Council (IEC) is a nonprofit association based in Washington, D.C. IEC works with international institutions of higher education and their partners, including organizations that provide financing to students or recruitment assistance to schools outside of the United States. IEC works on the issues affecting international education, specifically financial aid. IEC communicates with and policy makers regarding U.S. financial aid programs on behalf of its members.

IEC maintains contact with the U.S. Congress, the U.S. Department of Education and other agencies in the Executive Branch and with diplomatic missions in Washington to monitor how laws and regulations affect foreign institutions that host American students. IEC acts in brings issues of concern and importance to the attention of the proper U.S. government officials and provides essential advice and recommendations to its members.

IEC's accomplishments include:

- ✓ **Convincing Congress to change the Higher Education Act (HEA)** so that colleges outside of the US that want their students to be able to get U.S. government guaranteed loans **are permitted to file financial audits done to their own countries' standards** rather than according to U.S. accounting standards. This averted a crisis. Otherwise, most non- U.S. colleges would have had to commission expensive audits done to US standards or lose their eligibility for the loans. It took years of work and explaining, but Congress listened.
- ✓ **Getting flexibility in the law so many schools will get waivers from compliance audits.**
- ✓ **Insuring that foreign institutions were treated fairly** when Congress reauthorized the Higher Education Act, a five-year process that was completed in 2008.
- ✓ Making sure that foreign schools were not left out when changes were made, such as the general **increase in the dollar amount of Stafford loans** that U.S. students can borrow.
- ✓ **Earning the reinstatement of the eligibility of U.S. graduate veterinary students** for Stafford and PLUS loans. An error in the Higher Education Act amendments of 1998 cut off veterinary students from loan eligibility. After IEC was founded in 2002, it convinced the U.S. Congress to pass a special bill to correct the error.
- ✓ **Working with the examination authority to encourage it to report medical licensing exam scores** to the U.S. Education Department, avoiding privacy and other issues schools have had in completing the reports, which are required by the law.

There is more to do:

The U.S. Department of Education is about to start a negotiating process to write the final regulations that will put the changes in the HEA into effect. This will take most of 2009. IEC will participate in this process.

Also, two U.S. government agencies are studying non- U.S. medical schools and Congress may change how their graduates are treated in the U.S. based on the outcome of these studies. IEC is watching the progress of the studies and communicating with the agencies – the Education Department and the Government Accountability Office.