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For Immediate Release:

TEDNA Statement on Omnibus Bill regarding FAFSA Data with Tribes and Tribal Organizations:

### **FY 2018 Omnibus Bill Authorizes Institutions to Share FAFSA Data with Tribes and Tribal Organizations**

March 23, 2018 passage of the FY2018 omnibus bill includes a provision that clarifies that an institution may share FAFSA information with tribes and tribal organizations to assist in applying for and receiving financial assistance. TEDNA has learned from a recent announcement by NASFAA (National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators).

TEDNA has advocated on behalf of tribes and Tribal Education Departments to ensure access to student data for student financial aid administration and to support tribal education sovereignty and capacity-building.

Previously, Tribes and Tribal organizations were prohibited from accessing student data to award scholarship financial aid, and this has resulted in patchwork fixes or work-arounds that require tribal students, Tribes, and Tribal Education Departments to take extra steps in order to award financial aid to students. US Education Department's Privacy and Technical Assistance Center (PTAC) previously gave verbal guidance that prohibited a student from providing permission to an Institution to share their FAFSA data with Tribes and Tribal Organizations. The current legislative language overrides this prohibition and authorizes institutions to share FAFSA information with Tribes and Tribal Organizations.

The new language in the omnibus spending bill grants permission to institutions to disclose student aid information to tribes and tribal organizations, as well as private scholarship-granting institutions.

US Education Department has stated that there will be no new guidance issued on this provision. Thus, Tribes and Tribal Organizations may immediately begin to work with institutions on information sharing for purposes of student financial aid. If you would like to read the language regarding this info via the Omnibus Bill, please click [here](#) (discussed information starts on p. 1006).

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