



## Sandra Pihos

*State Representative • District 42*

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Dear Constituent:

Thank you for your letter regarding the status of the Monetary Award Program's (MAP) current funding situation. It has been a difficult year ensuring that all of our most important programs receive needed funding under such trying economic conditions. Your frustration and concern on this issue is justified and understandable.

The MAP program is considered the pinnacle of the many student assistance programs offered in Illinois and is a crucial monetary award for deserving Illinois students who lack adequate resources to attend institutions of higher education without financial assistance. Universities and community colleges are doing all they can to provide financial help to those students who qualify and I fully understand and agree that additional resources are needed to ensure that these students can continue their education.

It is incumbent upon all parties, including the Governor, to recognize what an asset student assistance grant programs like MAP are to maintaining student retention and success in Illinois. At this time, university presidents and other interested parties are lobbying the Governor's Office to fully fund MAP for the 2009-2010 school year. The Governor has the option to allocate a portion of his \$1.2 billion in discretionary fiscal year 2010 funds to continue the MAP program in the spring semester. The House Committee for Higher Education is meeting this Thursday, October, 15<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 PM to discuss this issue.

Please know that I unequivocally support fully funding the MAP Grants and will continue my efforts to lobby on this issue. I am hopeful that a funding agreement can be reached when the General Assembly convenes for the upcoming October Veto Session. There are some indicators that a vote may come to the floor to invest additional state funds into the grants. If you would like an update on the outcome, please subscribe to my newsletter on my website at [www.sandrapihos.com](http://www.sandrapihos.com) and I will post the information as soon as it becomes available.

Thank you very much for contacting my office on this critical issue.

Best regards,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sandra Pihos".

Sandra Pihos  
State Representative, District 42