

It has come to my attention that funding is at risk for the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education (WICHE) Professional Student Exchange Program (PSEP). Due to COVID-19, the WICHE office is facing substantial reductions in their budget and the office may not have the funding needed to support WICHE students. I realize that due to the negative economic impact of the Coronavirus, the budget has shrunk exponentially but I implore you to maintain funding for WICHE and relatively the PSEP program.

This will negatively impact Nevada students who must leave the state to pursue professional education, which Nevada does not currently accommodate for. Native Nevadan students who are currently studying, Medicine, Dentistry, Optometry, , Physical Therapy, Physician's Assistant, and Veterinary Medicine will all be affected. These young and bright Nevadans are already tasked with large tuition costs, out of state housing, and moving costs to their respective schools/states. Without WICHE's funding to the PSEP program, many of these Nevadans will not be able to afford to finish their studies, or achieve their goals. This is detrimental to both the future of young and talented Nevadans, but also to the great state of Nevada itself.

As you may know Students supported by the PSEP program are required to work in Nevada for 2 to 4 years. As you can see for yourself many of these schools of study are considered essential to our society. Cutting funding of the WICHE's PSEP program will deprive Nevada of many essential employees and also minimize the pool of qualified, available workers that will shutter Nevadan society for years, if not decades to come.

I humbly ask you to not defund WICHE's PSEP program. This decision will affect Nevada and its inhabitants for years to come. Many students have already planned around the support of the PSEP program, and if defunded many will have no choice but to either drop out, or change Majors after committing many years to their study of choice.

For the sake of Nevada, and Nevadans, do not defund WICHE PSEP.

Robert Sinclair