



OFFICE OF POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION
MAR 29 2000

THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY

nis Obergfell
President, NASSGAP
State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana
150 W. Market Street
Suite 500
Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

Dear Mr. Obergfell:

Thank you for your letter to Secretary Richard Riley concerning the negotiated rulemaking process currently underway. You expressed concern that the National Association of State Student Grant and Aid Programs (NASSGAP) was not included as a negotiator for this round of negotiations. Secretary Riley has asked me to respond on his behalf.

In forming the negotiating committees, the Department's goal is to ensure that significantly affected parties are represented without making the committees so large as to be unmanageable and potentially unsuccessful. In making the initial selection of negotiators, the Department believed that the concerns of the state agencies were adequately represented by a number of loan organizations participating on Committee 1.

At the first meeting of Committee I on February 3, 2000, Committee I adopted organizational protocols to be used for this round of negotiations. Under these protocols, the committee may add members and requests for membership must be approved by a consensus of the committee. After the protocols were adopted, NASSGAP petitioned to be added to the membership of the committee. Committee I rejected that request. Once the protocols were adopted, the full committee must approve any additional members.

The Department values your input on the issues being addressed through the negotiated rulemaking process, and I would encourage you to participate in the regulatory development by making your views known to members of the committee. I look forward to working with you on issues affecting the student financial aid programs. A. Lee Fritschler

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Lee Fritschler", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.