

WILL: Urges feds to inject federalism into higher education accreditation

Posted on Thursday, Sep 13, 2018

>> **WisPolitics is now on the State Affairs network. Get custom keyword notifications, bill tracking and all WisPolitics content. [Get the app or access via desktop.](#)**

Testimony urges competition to achieve reform, spur innovation
September 13, 2018 – Milwaukee, WI – WILL Deputy Counsel and Director of Regulatory Reform and Federalism, Lucas Vebber, submitted testimony urging the federal Department of Education to undertake bold reforms to regulations implementing Federal Student Aid programs.

The Department of Education's Office of Postsecondary Education recently announced plans to convene a negotiated rulemaking committee to prepare regulations for the Federal Student Aid programs authorized under the federal Higher Education Act. Unfortunately, federal law limits who can partake in that committee and largely limits it to parties who are committed to maintaining a broken status quo. Colleges and universities, in order to maintain accreditation, are then beholden to this status quo resulting in little innovation or competition. WILL is encouraging the federal Education Department to shake up this committee and encouraging the embrace of the principles of competitive federalism as they work to improve regulations. Under the current system, too much power is vested in the hands of regional accreditors. More competition and more innovation, not less, is what is needed.

The testimony reads in part:

"The current system is almost entirely controlled by the federal bureaucracy. Regional accreditors who have been approved by ED set accreditation standards and work with higher education institutions to determine if they're being met. A loss of accreditation would essentially force most any institution of higher learning to close down. In this way, those institutions are beholden to their accreditor. This connection between institutions of higher education and their accreditors is what

largely maintains the status quo. Injecting competition or alternatives into this process would free institutions to move toward innovation, and would encourage new participants to engage in the area of higher education.”

The testimony can be read in full [here](#).