



For Immediate Release

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**Aid to students with drug convictions restored  
“Exercise Your Rights” flyer being distributed nationwide**

**Washington, DC (February 9, 2006)** – Thousands of students with drug convictions, many of whom are in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs, will be eligible for federal financial aid to students. A provision in the budget bill signed into law by President Bush today will help people with drug convictions regain eligibility for federal student financial aid, which has been denied since 1998.

“We applaud this important first step in making educational financial aid available to all Americans. It will increase opportunities for thousands of people, many of whom are in recovery from addiction to alcohol and other drugs,” said Merlyn Karst, chair of Faces & Voices of Recovery. “Most Americans supported changing the law and viewed the ban on student aid as discriminatory against people who want a chance to make a positive change in their lives.”

Under the new law, people can receive aid unless they are convicted of a drug felony or misdemeanor while in school. Students convicted while receiving federal aid will remain ineligible – for one year for a first possession offense, two years for a second and indefinitely for a third, with harsher penalties for selling. Repeal of the ban on federal financial aid to students with drug convictions is one element of Faces & Voices of Recovery’s Right to Addiction Recovery platform.

Faces & Voices of Recovery is releasing a flyer, “Exercise Your Rights.” It will be distributed through recovery community organizations around the country. It informs likely students of their restored right to federal financial aid to attend community college, technical school and college.

Faces & Voices of Recovery is working to mobilize, organize and rally the families, friends and allies of the millions of Americans in recovery from addiction in a campaign to: end discrimination; broaden social understanding; and achieve a just response to addiction as a public health crisis. For more information, please visit: [www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org](http://www.facesandvoicesofrecovery.org).

