



July 15, 2005

Dear Friends:

Every five years, Congress has the chance to boost college opportunities and to make college more affordable for students by renewing the law funding higher education. Unfortunately, this week the House Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on 21st Century Competitiveness failed to produce a plan to make college more affordable when it considered the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (H.R. 609).

### College Costs

This Republican bill makes major cuts to vital student aid programs - totaling as much as \$12 billion over the next five years -- **the largest single cut to student aid assistance in the program's 40 year history**. In addition, this bill will force low- and middle-income students to pay thousands of dollars more for college by:

- Capping the maximum Pell grant through 2013;
- Eliminating the low fixed consolidation rate benefit that will force student borrowers to pay \$3,300 more for loans; and,
- Forcing a tax on student borrowers that will charge them \$3.6 billion in additional taxes over the 10 years.

Now more than ever, Congress should be working to expand affordable college opportunities to ensure the nation's economic success and national security, and to meet critical national priorities. I offered [an amendment that will make college more affordable](#) for students by offering incentives to schools that keep costs down. Sadly, Republicans struck this common sense amendment.

### Fraud and Abuse

The Higher Education reauthorization bill repeals key student aid safeguards enacted in 1992 to prevent fraud and abuse. I offered an amendment that passed to require the Education Secretary to commission an independent, non partisan, comprehensive study on the prevention of fraud and abuse in financial aid programs in order to determine which policies work and should be retained. In a time of tight budgets, safeguarding the integrity of student aid funds should be the top priority for Congress to ensure the most efficient and effective use of taxpayer funds for student aid. [Click here](#) to read my statement.

### For-Profit Institutions

Republicans are focused on increasing taxpayer dollars to corporate schools when we should be increasing access and affordability to students. When this bill is considered in the full committee next week, my priorities are to put student interests first and limit the influence of corporate schools that emphasize the bottom line to satisfy stockholders.

Sincerely,

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

Serving Minnesota's Fourth District

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