

A photograph of Betty McCollum, a woman with dark hair, smiling and looking to the right. In the background, the dome of the Minnesota State Capitol building is visible under a blue sky. The text "CONGRESSWOMAN Betty McCollum MINNESOTA'S 4th DISTRICT" is overlaid on the right side of the image.

CONGRESSWOMAN  
**Betty McCollum**  
MINNESOTA'S 4th DISTRICT

March 31, 2006

Dear Friends:

The Higher Education Act is one of the most important laws governing our nation's education system. It creates access to college for millions of students each year. The reauthorization of this law should serve as an opportunity to improve the current law and make college more accessible. Unfortunately, the underlying bill does nothing to make college more affordable.

On the heels of the largest cuts in the history of federal student financial aid—which no Democrat voted in favor of—this House once again fails to make college more affordable for students at a time when tuition is rising faster than the rate of inflation and when financial aid is not keeping up with the rising cost of a college education. And, at a time when this Congress is voting for tax giveaways for the nation's wealthiest.

I wish I were rising today to applaud and support a Congress that plans to make good history today. Unfortunately, this is a “do nothing” bill. This is a missed opportunity bill. It is disingenuous to claim that this bill improves access and affordability.

Unfortunately, the students and colleges in my district-- and millions more across the country-- will share in my disappointment that this Congress did not make the investments needed to ensure a competitive and prepared nation for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Betty".

Congresswoman Betty McCollum  
Serving Minnesota's Fourth Congressional District

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