



Dear Congress,

We strongly urge you include the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act (SAFRA) in the upcoming reconciliation bill.

In response to a multi-million dollar lobbying campaign by the student loan industry, some Senators are opposing SAFRA, a common-sense plan that would cut government waste, make college more affordable for hundreds of thousands of people, invest in our schools, and expand our economy.

Since there is already a shortfall in the Pell grant program that SAFRA would help make up, the price of heeding their opposition to student loan reform is 500,000 low and middle income students losing their their Pell grants at the same time that state budget cuts make tuition costs soar. Eight million students would see their awards cut by 60%.

Some Senators suggest they are worried about SAFRA's impact on the deficit. Let's be clear: Switching from the FFEL student loan program to direct lending, by itself, will reduce, not increase, the deficit. Whatever new investments are made in education, there is no sound rationale for continuing FFEL – a wasteful giveaway of taxpayer money to wealthy student loan companies. Members of Congress who defend FFEL are acting to increase the deficit.

We can no longer afford to waste billions on special interest subsidies while higher education budgets are cut, college costs skyrocket, and students and their families are struggling to afford a higher education.

We applaud Rep. Miller, Sen. Harkin, the President, and other leaders who are championing these critical reforms.

Sincerely,

United States Student Association
Contact: Jake Stilwell - media@usstudents.org

United States Public Interest Research Group
Chris Lindstrom - chris.lindstrom@pirg.org

Campus Progress
Katie Andriulli - kandriulli@americanprogress.org