

College Park, MD- Congressman Steny H. Hoyer (D-MD) and Congressman Ben Cardin (D-MD) joined student leaders and higher education advocates at the University of Maryland today for a discussion on college affordability.

According to the College Board, tuition and fees at four-year public colleges have climbed 46% percent since 2001 – nearly six times faster than Pell scholarships. Yet, Congress is poised to pass devastating budget cuts slashing billions of dollars from student aid programs. Hoyer decried the cuts as detrimental to students and families.

“If the House goes forward with the current plans to reconcile our nation's debt in this manner, it will result in the single largest student aid cut in history,” Hoyer said. “The typical student will pay \$5,800 more for college loans - keep in mind, the typical student is already \$17,500 in debt.”

The changes currently proposed would amount to \$14.3 billion in cuts by charging student borrowers higher fees, raising student loan interest rate caps and raising rates on consolidation loans. Meanwhile, the Republican budget plan provides \$106 billion in new tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans

“These are misplaced priorities,” Hoyer said. “It is simply immoral to balance the budget on the backs of our nation's students and their families.”

Representatives from the Maryland Public Interest Research Group, the U.S. Student Association, and the University of Maryland’s Student Government Association attended the forum and voiced their opposition to the cuts.

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