

weighed against the current situation in our economy, and what our schools are already committed to doing to assist needy students.

Madam Chair, I am pleased to rise in support of this legislation and I urge strongly that my colleagues do the same. We have all watched the tuition at public and private colleges double, then triple as time has passed, creating a burdensome gap for our students to overcome. The students of this country are our greatest hope—they are our future doctors, our future lawyers, our future teachers and our future public servants. To not ensure that they have an affordable, quality education would be to shortchange their success and the success of our country.

INTRODUCTION OF "NEWSPAPER REVITALIZATION ACT OF 2009"

**HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, today I am introducing the "Newspaper Revitalization Act of 2009," the companion to legislation introduced in the Senate by Senator CARDIN (D-MD). This legislation will help newspapers across the country that are closing down or facing bankruptcy at an alarming rate by allowing them to become non-profit 501(c)(3) organizations similar to public broadcasting. Large cities whose newspapers include, The Philadelphia Inquirer, The Seattle Post-Intelligencer, The Rocky Mountain News, San Francisco Chronicle, and The Baltimore Sun are at risk of losing their dailies. Unless something is done soon, it is possible that many metropolitan regions may have no local daily newspapers.

Many bloggers, Google news, and punditry get their original news from the diligent work of beat reporters for daily newspapers who have invested years on their beat and provide the best information on an issue from many perspectives. This type of beat reporting requires commitments of both time and money, and unfortunately, the current economic climate has only worsened the already precarious business situation for many newspapers. This bill would provide for a voluntary option for newspapers and a way for a community or foundations to step in and preserve their local papers that are rapidly disappearing.

Newspapers are an essential component to our free democratic society. Studies have shown that areas where daily newspapers have gone out of business there has been a rise in corruption in government and plummeting civil engagement in politics. With the state of the current newspaper model, dependent on advertising and circulation revenue, it will be difficult for newspapers to maintain and produce high quality news without bold changes. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation as an important first step in saving them.

NATIONAL GEAR UP DAY

**HON. ELIOT L. ENGEL**

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 17, 2009

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program, or GEAR UP. This program has improved educational outcomes for over a million low-income students across the United States by providing college readiness partnerships and scholarships for low income students.

Tomorrow, September 18th, is the first annual "National GEAR UP Day" to acknowledge the success GEAR UP has had in providing students with the resources they need to go to college despite the challenges they may face in their communities. Over 1.5 million GEAR UP students have been served over the last ten years. GEAR UP offers comprehensive mentoring, tutoring, financial aid counseling and also provides information and activities regarding college admissions.

With my colleagues, Congressman CROWLEY and Congressman SERRANO, I would like to recognize the success of the Bronx Institute at Lehman College which administers three GEAR UP grants in more than 50 schools in the Bronx. These programs serve more than 8,500 Bronx students in grades 8, 9 and 11. They offer after school, weekend and evening classes and workshops for students and parents. Their project staff provides one to one counseling and college readiness support to all students and families. They have in place, and continue to develop and support, rigorous instructional programs that serve to prepare students for college level learning. Additionally, the Bronx Institute at Lehman College's technology program has distributed more than 6,500 laptops to students and will add to that number this year.

In the 110th Congress I was proud to have been a cosponsor and supporter of H. Res. 1311, expressing support for the designation of a National GEAR UP Day and am glad that it has come to realization.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to join with me in recognizing and commending the students, families, education professionals, and business and community leaders involved in GEAR UP on its 10th anniversary.

STUDENT AID AND FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY ACT OF 2009

SPEECH OF

**HON. MAXINE WATERS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 16, 2009

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3221) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes:

Ms. WATERS. Madam Chair, I rise to support H.R. 3221, the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act of 2009. I'd also like to commend my colleague from California, Chairman GEORGE MILLER for his hard work to bring this bill to the floor today.

Now more than ever, Americans need affordable and quality educational opportunities that will help make our economy stronger and more competitive. This bill embraces President Obama's challenge to produce more college graduates by the year 2020 by making higher education more accessible. This legislation achieves that goal by transforming the way student loan programs operate.

The Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act is the single largest investment in aid to help students and families pay for college in history—and it does so at no cost to taxpayers. The bill reforms the system of federal student loans to save taxpayers \$87 billion—and then invests \$77 billion of those savings back into education, particularly by making college more affordable, and directs \$10 billion back to the Treasury to reduce entitlement spending. Among its many provisions, I am especially pleased that the maximum Pell Grant is increased from \$5,350 in 2009 to \$5,550 in 2010 and to \$6,900 in 2019 and that interest rates are kept low on subsidized federal student loans. This will help more students graduate with less debt. Unfortunately, too many students are graduating with record debt, partly because grant aid doesn't cover nearly as large a share of college costs as it used to. This legislation will allow us to invest \$40 billion in the Pell Grant scholarship, to keep interest rates affordable on need-based federal student loans, to simplify the federal student aid application process, and to invest in other forms of aid that will help low-income, middle class and minority students pay for and complete college.

H.R. 3221 will also stabilize and safeguard the federal student loan program that students and families depend on to pay for college. The intertwined economic and credit crises have exposed serious vulnerabilities in the structure of the federally-guaranteed student loan program—putting it on life support. Families shouldn't have to worry about whether the roller coaster fluctuations of the financial markets will hurt their access to low-cost student loans. By originating all new federal loans through the cheaper Direct Loan program, students and parents will be able to receive the same loans with the added assurance that these loans are entirely reliable, no matter what happens in the economy. This simple change will save taxpayers \$87 billion over 10 years.

H.R. 3221 also builds on the best of what works in the private sector to provide borrowers with top-notch customer service. The legislation will allow state non-profit lenders and private industry to continue doing what they do best—servicing loans. It will allow private entities to compete for contracts to service these loans—ensuring that students get the best services available and maintaining jobs in communities across the country. This bill also eliminates waste and creates a streamlined, cost-effective program for families and taxpayers. Each year, billions of taxpayers' dollars are being sent into a program that no longer works—and that the Department of Education can administer for a much lower cost. This is exactly the kind of waste we need to eliminate in tough fiscal times. By cutting out the middleman, this legislation will save taxpayers \$87 billion over 10 years, according to the Congressional Budget Office. It's a smarter business decision for taxpayers and families.