

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

September 29, 2023

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Charles Schumer
Majority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Minority Leader
U.S. Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Speaker McCarthy, House Minority Leader Jeffries, Senate Majority Leader Schumer, and Senate Minority Leader McConnell,

We write to advocate for the inclusion of the Biden Administration's request of an additional \$2.3 billion in resources to the Department of Education's Student Aid Administration in any government funding package. This funding is critical to assist borrowers across the country as the federal student loan repayment pause ends. As of September 1, interest began to accrue on student loans. In the coming weeks, tens of millions of borrowers will start making payments for the first time in over three years, and many for the first time ever. It is imperative that Congress provides additional funding to restart the student loan repayment system as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

The scale of this return to repayment presents an unprecedented challenge. Every borrower whose payments have been paused is due to receive a bill in October and the Biden Administration recently announced a new income-driven repayment plan. These changes set up a potentially difficult climate for borrowers to navigate under current funding levels. During the repayment pause, servicers undertook massive layoffs and reduced their call center hours. As a result, borrowers in every state will encounter significant wait times as they attempt to reach their loan servicer for information on their payments. Many borrowers have changed contact information or have had their accounts moved to a different servicer without any action on their part, complicating communication between borrowers and servicers. The Administration's \$2.3 billion request for additional funding will increase staffing at call centers and reinstate more evening and weekend hours. These resources will allow borrowers to quickly reach their loan servicers with inquiries, ensuring an efficient return to student loan repayment.

In the best interest of borrowers, Congress must provide additional funds now to prevent the looming crisis of confusion, frustration, and financial harm. Two successive administrations maintained the student loan repayment pause to assist Americans across the country through the economic hardships posed by the pandemic. It is imperative Congress adequately fund the return

ANDREA SALINAS
6TH DISTRICT, OREGON

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE

HOUSE COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE,
SPACE, AND TECHNOLOGY

CONGRESSIONAL EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE ON CHINA

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Washington, DC 20515

109 CANNON HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515-3706
(202) 225-5643

530 CENTER STREET NE
SUITE 415
SALEM, OR 97301
(503) 385-0906

18861 SW MARTINAZZI AVENUE
SUITE 200
TUALATIN, OR 97062
(503) 385-0906

SALINAS.HOUSE.GOV

to loan repayment to build on that critical assistance. We urge you to take swift action to ensure borrowers are set up for success in the return to repayment and are committed to working with you and the Administration to support such efforts.

Sincerely,



Andrea Salinas
Member of Congress



Brittany Pettersen
Member of Congress



Yadira Caraveo, M.D.
Member of Congress