



## NATIONAL DIRECT STUDENT LOAN COALITION

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### **National Direct Student Loan Coalition Urges Congress to Protect Pell Grants for Needy Students**

The National Direct Student Loan Coalition (NDSLC) would like to join our nation's students, schools, and financial aid administrators in recognizing and supporting Save Pell Day. With almost ten million low-income students benefitting from this critical federal grant, it is the backbone of the federal financial aid programs.

“While we understand tough choices have to be made on the federal budget, we should not be taking Pell Grants away from America's neediest students,” says Margaret Rodriguez, NDSLC's Chair and Senior Associate Director of Financial Aid at the University of Michigan. “The Pell Grant Program continues to be the cornerstone of the federal student aid programs and we need to make sure that we protect Pell Grants so all students have access to college.”

Just over a year ago, Congress took the necessary step to moving all student loans to the federally-run Direct Loan program. Schools have worked tirelessly over that time to implement these necessary changes and save taxpayers billions of dollars. According to the enacted legislation, these savings were to be directed into the Pell Grant Program to fund long-lasting increases for the neediest college students. To cut the same program now would be contrary to both the spirit and the letter of this very important legislation.

“Last year Congress made the right decision to invest the savings of moving all schools to direct lending into the Pell Grant Program,” states Rodriguez. “It was the right decision for America's students and parents and the right decision for our economy. We hope that Congress will continue to protect Pell Grants and realize it is not right to balance the budget on the backs of America's most vulnerable students.”

*The National Direct Student Loan Coalition is an alliance of schools dedicated to the continuous improvement and strengthening of the federal Direct Loan program. Coalition members are practicing financial aid professionals. For more information regarding the National Direct Student Loan Coalition, please see [www.directstudentloancoalition.org](http://www.directstudentloancoalition.org).*