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Petri Thanked for Longstanding Work on Student Loans



Washington, D.C.—At a meeting in his Washington, D.C. office earlier today, U.S. Representative Tom Petri (R-WI), a senior member of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce, met with the Direct Student Loan Coalition who thanked him for his many years of support and work on behalf of direct student loans and presented him with a framed letter of appreciation.

One member of the group thanked Petri for standing by his principles even when times were tough and opposition to the effort was strong. Another said he appreciated that Petri always took the time to meet with them personally rather than having a staff member take the meeting.

At the end of the meeting, Chuck Knepfle, the Director of Student Financial Aid at Clemson University and Chair of the National Direct Student Loan Coalition, presented Congressman Petri with a framed letter.

“On behalf of the National Direct Student Loan Coalition,” the letter reads, “I would like to express our deep appreciation to you for your years of thoughtful and sustained support for improving and reforming the federal student loan programs...”

“Together, we fought to refocus federal financial aid to support students through the passage of the historic legislation that resulted in the full transition to the federal Direct Loan program. Throughout

your congressional career you have moved forward policy to create sensible repayment plans that will serve students and taxpayers well in the years ahead.

“Millions of students have benefited from your vision and commitment to quality student lending. Your legacy will live on for all those you have helped to achieve their higher education goals...”

“We wish the very best as you retire from the Congress!”

The federal government eliminated the costly Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) program, where the government assumed all the risk of private student loan lending, in favor of direct lending in 2010. By some estimates, this will save the taxpayers more than \$60 billion over the next ten years.

Petri has served on the House Education Committee since 1979 and has been active in supporting commonsense solutions to improve student lending. In addition to supporting direct student lending, Congressman Petri has also advocated for universal income-based repayment, where students pay an affordable percentage of their income rather than fixed monthly payments that all too often leave recent graduates struggling to meet their obligations or in default. Petri and U.S. Representative Jared Polis (D-CO) introduced bipartisan legislation that would simplify and improve federal student lending and make students' payments automatically responsive to changes in income. [More information can be found here.](#)

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