

This is a challenging moment for students and young workers in New Jersey. College has never been more crucial to our economy and to job creation than it is today – but college also is more expensive now than ever before.

As a longtime teacher, I have seen firsthand the power of higher education to transform lives, and I want to share with you the steps I am taking in Congress to make college more affordable:

- **Keeping College Loan Rates Low.** A few years ago, I helped write a law that cut student loan interest rates from 6.8 to 3.4 percent, saving the average student borrower more than \$2,000. Recently, the new tea party members in Congress sought to undo this rate cut, creating an unnecessary crisis as students sought to plan for the year ahead. The good news is that I helped reach a compromise to ensure that rates will remain low for at least another year, helping 144,000 New Jersey students. Please know that I am supporting legislation to make the rate cut permanent.

- **Helping Math and Science Teachers Afford College.** The TEACH Grant program, created by a law that I helped write, provides up to \$4,000 a year in grants – up to \$16,000 over four years – for students who commit to teaching math, science, or foreign language for at least five years.

- **Supporting Graduates Who Enter Public Service.** Students who want to serve their communities as teachers, police officers, firefighters, and soldiers should not be prevented from doing so by college debt. A law that I helped write [forgives student loan debt after 10 years](#) for graduates who enter public service.

Education is key to the American Dream for individuals – and importantly, it is key to our nation's economic future. Each of us has a stake in ensuring that the next generation of workers, business leaders, and innovators has access to the opportunities they need to learn, succeed, and create new jobs.

Resources to Make College More Affordable

Recently, I joined officials from Rutgers and the New Jersey Higher Education Student

Assistance Authority to talk with local students and parents about college aid opportunities. Among the resources we shared:

- StudentAid.Ed.Gov is the Education Department's official source for free information on preparing for and funding education beyond high school.
- www.HESAA.Org , the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority's website, offers information on grants, scholarship, loans, and programs for veterans.

I am always happy to help you learn more about college affordability options or to help resolve problems with your student loans. Send a message at holt.house.gov/contact or call 1-87-RUSH-HOLT (1-877-874-4658).

Sincerely,

Rush Holt
Member of Congress