



AMERICAN  
PSYCHOLOGICAL  
ASSOCIATION

July 28, 2011

The Honorable John Boehner  
Speaker  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Harry Reid  
Majority Leader  
U.S. Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Boehner and Majority Leader Reid:

As Congress finalizes an agreement to address our nation's debt ceiling, the American Psychological Association (APA) wishes to make a final plea to reconsider the proposed elimination of the in-school interest subsidy on federal Stafford loans for graduate and professional students. This provision provides support for talented graduate students with financial need. As you may know, APA is the largest scientific and professional organization representing psychology in the United States, which strives to advance psychology as a science, as a profession, and as a means of promoting health, education, and human welfare.

We ask that you consider the long-term economic consequences of a provision that could make graduate and professional degrees unattainable for many of our nation's best and brightest students. Further, we ask that you consider the impact that eliminating the in-school interest subsidy will have on our most disadvantaged students – perhaps deterring them from pursuing higher degrees.

A recent report by the College Board, *Education Pays 2010*, notes that “Society as a whole also enjoys a financial return on the investment in higher education. In addition to widespread productivity increases, the higher earnings of educated workers generate higher tax payments at the local, state, and federal levels... Beyond the economic return to individuals and to society as a whole, higher education improves quality of life in a variety of ways, only some of which can be easily quantified. High levels of labor force participation, employment, and earnings increase the material well-being of individuals and the wealth of society, but also carry psychological benefits.”

An investment in our nation's graduate students is an investment in our nation itself – considering the positive impact it has in terms of dollars and cents, future competitiveness with other nations, and overall health and wellness of our society.

We know that our request comes at the 11th hour and that you have incredibly challenging decisions to make in the next few days. Still, it remains a proposal that is of great concern to the members of our Association, and we ask that you respectfully reconsider eliminating this small but important subsidy for graduate students.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "L. Michael Honaker".

L. Michael Honaker, PhD  
Deputy Chief Executive Officer

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