

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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OPEN FORUM ON COLLEGE VALUE AND
AFFORDABILITY

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THURSDAY,
NOVEMBER 21, 2013

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The above-entitled matter commenced at 10:00 a.m. in the Noland/LaBorde Ballroom of the Lod Cook Alumni Center at Louisiana State University, located at 3838 Lakeshore Drive, Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Jamienne Studley, Deputy Under Secretary, Department of Education, presiding.

PRESENT:

- KING ALEXANDER, President, Louisiana State University
- JAMES SHELTON, Assistant Deputy Secretary, Department of Education
- JAMIENNE STUDLEY, Deputy Under Secretary, Department of Education
- IVORY TOLDSON, Professor, Howard University
- MATTHEW VALERIUS, Presidential Management Fellow, Department of Education
- GEORGE COOPER, Executive Director, White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities

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P R O C E E D I N G S

10:00 a.m.

DR. ALEXANDER: Good morning.

Thank you for coming to this important educational forum. And if I can take a few minutes to describe sort of how it transpired and why the Department of Education along with many of our friends in the White House Domestic Policy Group in Education have come to LSU.

The issue of college, college affordability, value, lack of information in the marketplace for students, parents, taxpayers is at an all-time high. And we know that student indebtedness has broken \$1 trillion a year, surpassing credit card indebtedness as the nation's second leading debt load impacting our younger generation of students or graduates.

So about five years ago, five and a half years ago I was fortunate to have an opportunity to meet with the President with nine other university presidents and five public university presidents to talk about this issue

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1 along with Secretary Duncan. There was a great
2 deal of concern about the indebtedness, about
3 college affordability, when it stops, how high
4 does an institution need to go, what do we do as
5 a nation with regard to the status that we now
6 recognize we're in.

7 And I'll point out that this perhaps
8 is the first Department of Education to
9 recognize that the United States is no longer the
10 leader in world higher education that we were.
11 In fact, we're one of the few nations if not the
12 only nation in the OECD where the older
13 generation has more college degrees than the
14 younger generation.

15 And let me point out that statistic,
16 that we rank first in the world in college
17 degrees for 55-to-64-year-olds and we rank
18 eleventh in the world in college degrees for
19 25-to-34-year-olds. And if this goes
20 unaddressed, by the year 2016 we will drop to
21 sixteenth, by the year 2020 we will drop to
22 nearly twenty-first in the world in college

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1 degrees for a younger generation.

2 So the urgency of this issue, the
3 urgency of tackling what we're doing in higher
4 education has never been more important. And
5 having said that, that we now have the federal
6 government very involved and concerned about
7 this issue, as they should be.

8 Because in 1972, when the last great
9 debate in higher education took place, we came
10 up with the idea that the federal government was
11 simply going to augment states, it was going to
12 be one that supplied additional funding to
13 states and states were going to be the primary
14 supplier of revenues and support to higher
15 education.

16 Today we find that this has not been
17 the case. And in fact states are down to \$70
18 billion in support for higher education from a
19 high of 90 billion, and the federal government
20 is up to 150 to 160 plus, even 170 when you factor
21 in tax credits and other additional revenues to
22 supply to higher education. So the primary

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1 supplier of revenues to higher education is
2 indeed the federal government.

3 So when people ask about why are you
4 interested in the Department of Education or why
5 is the President increasingly interested, I
6 think they do have a vested interest in how our
7 dollars are spent and how our parents are
8 utilizing resources, and indeed how much
9 information our parents and students actually
10 have in the marketplace.

11 Unfortunately, we've seen a number
12 of other things develop in higher education.
13 We've seen the proliferation of for-profit
14 universities throughout the land, in many
15 industrial parks and street corners throughout
16 the United States. Many of those institutions
17 are not market-based institutions, but indeed
18 they are direct-student-aid-reliant
19 institutions.

20 And the challenge for us as a nation
21 is how do we address this issue by demonstrating
22 good value. How do we demonstrate the fact that

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1 we want affordability. How do we ensure that
2 our states stay engaged in funding higher
3 education along with federal supplements and
4 along with the federal government.

5 So I think the timing is right to ask
6 these questions. The timing is right to have
7 another higher education debate, one that we
8 haven't had since 1972, one that we need to have
9 to ensure that ten years from now there will be
10 student aid in the system.

11 So there is indeed an urgency in this
12 topic, there is an urgency in developing
13 solutions. Because what truly is at stake is
14 the fact that we will not have federal student
15 aid in ten years if nothing is done. So perhaps
16 the worst thing we could be doing right now is
17 to do nothing.

18 In the first attempt to address this
19 issue in the early '90s, it was higher education
20 that unified in the early '90s to kill an idea
21 which asked the states to step forward to
22 regulate better which institutions were getting

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1 public money, which institutions deserved
2 public money, and which institutions were doing
3 a good job.

4 Well, we unified as institutions
5 throughout the nation as higher education
6 organizations, and we indeed killed that idea.
7 Well, now we're dealing with the aftermath of
8 this idea and this concept 20 years later.
9 Twenty plus years later we're dealing with a
10 system that is on the brink of losing student
11 aid.

12 And in fact the best example that we
13 have is that we spent 15 years trying to get
14 summer Pell Grants for students. Because of the
15 pressure on the system, to back money out to
16 reduce the amount of student aid in the system,
17 because very little parameters had been put on
18 the system, we lost summer Pell two years later,
19 which we're still fighting to regain in the
20 coming session and increasing sessions.

21 So today we're here with a panel of
22 experts from the Department of Education. They

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1 picked four sites throughout the United States
2 in each region of the country. They went to
3 George Mason University in northeast Virginia,
4 they've been to Cal State, Dominguez Hills in
5 southern Los Angeles, they've been to Northern
6 Iowa University, and now they've come to LSU to
7 talk with Louisiana parents, citizens,
8 presidents, others about what the federal
9 government can do to sustain the current
10 financial structure that we have in place so that
11 we don't lose the funding that we have and our
12 students don't suffer five, ten, 15 years from
13 now.

14 So the panel of experts that I'm
15 going to introduce to you are here to answer your
16 questions, they're here to listen to your
17 comments, and they're here to take inquiries
18 into how this will develop in the next 16 to 18
19 months. This is a process of listening, it's a
20 process of devising a new system that actually
21 rewards institutions for doing things with the
22 greatest public good.

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1 Currently the only rankings that
2 exist in the United States and rating systems
3 that exist in the United States reward
4 institutions and incentivize institutions for
5 doing the exact opposite. They reward
6 institutions for turning away as many students
7 as possible. They reward institutions for
8 spending as much money on the fewest amount of
9 students as possible.

10 So this is a challenge for our nation
11 to develop a better system, not necessarily of
12 rankings but a better system of identifying
13 which institutions are serving public missions,
14 which institutions are serving the public good,
15 and which institutions are still committed to
16 the things that public higher education was
17 committed to for decades in the past before we
18 all privatize and move away from these
19 structures and move away from these commitments
20 and missions.

21 So it is an honor to have all of you
22 here, and we look forward to hearing the

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1 discussions. And our panel from the Department
2 of Education, let me introduce them for you.

3 Dr. George Cooper, on my far left,
4 is a Senior Fellow with AASCU. And if you don't
5 know, AASCU is the American Association of State
6 Colleges and Universities, of which I'm
7 fortunate to be a board member, representing 450
8 plus public universities in the United States
9 and over 35 percent of the student population in
10 the country.

11 He's involved extensively in
12 federal legislation and federal legislative
13 initiatives with historically black colleges
14 and universities throughout the United States.
15 Dr. Cooper is a former president of South
16 Carolina State University and has spent many
17 years in the Department of Agriculture's
18 Institute of Food and Agriculture. Dr. Cooper
19 is a graduate of Florida A&M, he's a Rattler, and
20 he has graduate degrees from Tuskegee University
21 and Ph.D. from the University of Illinois
22 Champaign-Urbana.

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1 To his right, Dr. Ivory Toldson, was
2 recently named to the new leadership team for the
3 White House Initiative for Historically Black
4 Colleges and Universities. He's Deputy
5 Director in the Department of Education and an
6 associate professor at Howard University and
7 senior research analyst for the Congressional
8 Black Caucus Foundation, and editor-in-chief of
9 the Journal of Negro Education. He spent nearly
10 four years as a faculty member right here at
11 Southern University A&M and has a degree in
12 psychology from LSU.

13 Welcome back, Ivory.

14 He has graduate degrees, a master's
15 degree from Penn State and a Ph.D. from Temple
16 University in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

17 Welcome, Ivory.

18 Ms. Jamie Studley, who we were
19 fortunate to meet with for the last hour, many
20 of us, was recently named Deputy Under Secretary
21 of the U.S. Department of Education in September
22 of this past year. She has worked extensively

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1 on federal student aid policy when she was CEO
2 of Public Advocates, Inc.

3 Ms. Studley was also former
4 president of Skidmore College in New York, and
5 was Deputy and Acting General Counsel of the U.S.
6 Department of Education in the Bill Clinton
7 administration. She is former Associate Dean
8 of Law at the Yale Law School, and is a graduate
9 of Barnard College at Columbia University and
10 the Harvard Law School, where she was president
11 of the student/faculty government. You will
12 see Ms. Studley here with us all day today to take
13 your comments and answer questions.

14 And finally I'd like to introduce
15 James Shelton, Assistant Deputy Secretary for
16 Innovation and Improvement. Jim Shelton is
17 Assistant Deputy and is managing a portfolio
18 that includes most of the Department's
19 competitive teacher quality functions, school
20 choice functions, and learning technology
21 programs housed in the Office of Innovation and
22 Improvement.

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1 Previously he served as program
2 director for the education division of the Bill
3 & Melinda Gates Foundation, managing the
4 foundation's national programs and work in the
5 northeast region of the United States. Mr.
6 Shelton has also been a partner and the East
7 Coast lead for NewSchools Venture Fund and
8 co-founder of LearnNow, a school management
9 company that later was acquired by Edison
10 Schools.

11 He spent four years as senior
12 management consultant with McKinsey & Company in
13 Atlanta, Georgia, where he advised CEOs and
14 other executives on issues related to corporate
15 strategy, business development, organizational
16 design, and operational effectiveness. On
17 leaving McKinsey, he joined Knowledge Universe,
18 Inc., where he launched, acquired, and operated
19 many educational related businesses.

20 Mr. Shelton has a bachelor's degree
21 in computer science from Morehouse College as
22 well as a master's degree in business

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1 administration and education from Stanford
2 University. Currently he resides in
3 Washington, D.C., which is his hometown.
4 There's not many people that can claim
5 Washington, D.C. as their hometown but Jim
6 certainly can. So at this time would you give
7 a great LSU welcome to Mr. Jim Shelton.

8 DR. SHELTON: Thank you, President
9 Alexander. Good morning. First let me tell
10 you that was a generous introduction. As you
11 heard from the introductions, there are three
12 experts plus me, so I am glad to be here with you.

13 But what I want to do today is sort
14 of frame why we are having this conversation in
15 a slightly different way. President Alexander
16 laid it out exactly right. The work that has to
17 be done, the history that we've had puts us
18 actively at risk. What I want to do is tell you
19 a little bit of story, because we're all coming
20 to this work through our own experiences that I
21 did before I even joined the Administration.

22 Just before I joined the

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1 Administration I was with the Gates Foundation
2 and I was working in Washington, D.C., and D.C.
3 decided that it wanted to run a program called
4 Double The Numbers, to double the numbers of
5 students that were coming out of D.C. schools
6 that graduate from college.

7 And in the context of doing that you
8 did the kind of analysis to say so, you know,
9 what's happening to our kids in K-12, what's
10 happening as they proceed to go towards college,
11 what colleges are they going to, and where are
12 they graduating from.

13 One of the analysis that we did there
14 was, okay, where are the kids going to college
15 and where are they graduating from. And one of
16 the things that was important in that was to
17 actually segment it and segment it into five
18 different categories based on selectivity,
19 which also had a high correlation with income,
20 as you might guess.

21 Something struck us. When you
22 looked at the category of open admissions you had

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1 a range of colleges that had graduation rates
2 ranging from 11 percent to 59 percent. Now,
3 this means for kids who could have gone to any
4 one of those institutions they had the
5 opportunity to choose anywhere from having a
6 1-in-10 chance to getting out to at least a
7 6-in-10 chance of getting out.

8 We all know that exists. The
9 interesting thing about it is none of the
10 counselors, none of the parents, none of the
11 principals before that analysis was done was
12 using that information to help make their
13 choices about where those students would go to
14 school.

15 Students were, even with the best
16 advice that people were giving them, making
17 decisions based on a lot of other factors other
18 than the one that I think that many of us would
19 think is one of the most important things that
20 you could consider: what are my odds of
21 actually getting out.

22 So this is something that feels like

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1 common sense but the reality is that the
2 President has taken it one step further. As
3 President Alexander said, this is not only
4 important for individual communities but, for
5 every individual college, is the best investment
6 that they're going to make: some kind of
7 postsecondary education that lets them have an
8 opportunity to get into related work and a career
9 where, when industries change, when jobs change,
10 they have the opportunity to keep moving
11 forward.

12 We know this is not only important
13 for the individual but our competitiveness as a
14 nation depends on having people who can compete,
15 not anymore with the people around them but with
16 people around the world. And yet recognizing
17 how important this is, what we've allowed
18 ourselves to do is to have a system that has
19 become extraordinarily expensive, the cost of
20 which is growing at rates far outstripping
21 family incomes in our country.

22 And yet the outcomes have not kept

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1 up with that increase in expense. That is the
2 very basic problem that we have to solve. We
3 have to get about the business of getting many
4 more people to graduate and graduate ready for
5 the best opportunities in life, and to make it
6 much more affordable for them to do so.

7 Because not only can they not afford
8 it, we can't afford it. We can't afford it in
9 terms of the trillion dollars in debt that you
10 heard. We can't afford it in terms of the
11 increases in aid that are pouring into the
12 systems, especially at the federal level as
13 states start to pull back on the funding that
14 they provide to higher education.

15 We need to make it transparent for
16 people, what it is not only that they're paying
17 but why they're paying it and what they're paying
18 it for. They need to understand that when the
19 tuition goes up at a college it may not be just
20 because the people at the college wanted to raise
21 the tuition but that those components of what
22 makes up, the aid that they normally would have

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1 gotten have faded away.

2 So we're focused on creating a
3 system and the President has called us to create
4 a system that will allow us to not only invest
5 in the individuals but to allow them to take
6 those dollars in disproportionate ways to
7 institutions that are going to serve them well
8 and that serve the public good well, that serve
9 the public interest of access, that recognize
10 the importance of affordability, and ultimately
11 of course that produce great student outcomes.
12 That is the work that we're setting about.

13 But we know that this framework is
14 something that we can't enter into lightly.
15 Done clumsily or carelessly or without proper
16 thought, we could create unintended
17 consequences, unintended incentives. So that
18 is why we are here to listen to you.

19 To understand exactly how we create
20 a system of ratings that actually takes into
21 consideration all the things that are important,
22 that not only takes into consideration whether

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1 or not students got out but which students got
2 out, how many students got out. Did you take
3 care of the students who were least likely to be
4 successful, who needed the most support and
5 resources.

6 What assistance can we create to get
7 people in the business of taking those folks who
8 have not historically done well in the business
9 of doing that extraordinarily well. Because
10 what we know as a country is we can't get that
11 aspiration, we can't get back to number one
12 unless we get different people than we've ever
13 gotten to graduate from school before to
14 graduate. It's just that simple.

15 So I don't want to talk to you much
16 more because I'd love to hear much more from you.
17 We have been out across the country, in Chicago,
18 in Boulder, Colorado, in D.C. We'll hear in
19 person, we'll hear online. What is important is
20 for us to not only hear from you but for you to
21 be clear about how we get to our common
22 objective, propelling this country back to

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1 number one.

2 Some people think that objective is
3 not something that speaks to the core of the
4 morality of why you would actually do this work.
5 There is a individual moral purpose about giving
6 opportunity to individual people, but I actually
7 wanted to tie those two things together.

8 We cannot sustain the American
9 promise, especially for those who have
10 historically not benefitted from it, if we don't
11 solve this problem. This is an economic
12 problem, it's a competitive problem, but it is
13 also a social justice problem.

14 So I'm happy to hear from you today.
15 We are looking forward to listening to it.
16 You're going to have a series of folks. There
17 are folks who are not up here with us who are also
18 here listening as well that will go back into the
19 system.

20 And Jamie Studley will talk to you
21 about exactly how we're going to pull all this
22 together and will fit into a broader framework

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1 of the work that the Administration hopes to do,
2 building on things like Know Before You Owe and
3 the other things that we started to put together
4 but that will drive the incentives of this
5 billions and billions in dollars industry, if
6 you want to call it that, so that we do right by
7 students, we do right by families, and we do
8 right by our communities and country.

9 With that, I'll turn it over to Jamie
10 Studley, Deputy Under Secretary of Education.
11 Thank you.

12 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you, Jim.

13 It's a pleasure to be here, and I too
14 am delighted to be at LSU. It's my first visit,
15 and I really appreciate the warm hospitality and
16 the deep commitment to these issues from
17 President Alexander and his outstanding staff.

18 Department officials have already
19 had 50 meetings like this one, four open forums
20 that you heard the president talk about, and also
21 much smaller, on-the-ground conversations with
22 students and parents, student leaders and

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1 business leaders, college opportunity programs
2 very importantly, and the higher ed community
3 across the board.

4 We have special meetings set up
5 while we're here on this visit, today with HBCU
6 presidents and other leaders so that we can hear
7 that particular perspective and tomorrow with a
8 set of different players from the community and
9 technical college perspective. Because we want
10 to reach everybody in higher education. This is
11 a critically important justice and opportunity
12 mission, and we want to hear from everybody.

13 Let me just mention in addition to
14 the colleagues whom you met, and I've a little
15 update. Dr. Cooper is now serving as the
16 Executive Director of the White House Initiative
17 on Historically Black Colleges and
18 Universities, just to round out his experience.
19 And he and Ivory Toldson have brought a new power
20 and direction to the leadership of that team.
21 In addition, Matt Valerius and Robert Gomez are
22 here from the Department and have been very

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1 helpful in arranging the meetings with all of
2 you.

3 We are going to listen, as Jim
4 Shelton said to you, and we are going to take what
5 we hear from you about how best to serve
6 students, how best to understand the outcomes
7 and productivity of the investment in
8 postsecondary education in college in all of its
9 shapes and forms, put it together with the best
10 technical thinking about how to understand the
11 data that we have to support those kind of
12 understandings. How can we make things like
13 graduation rates of Pell-eligible students
14 understandable to people who are making
15 important college choices for themselves, their
16 children, their students.

17 We will provide a draft in the spring
18 that incorporates to the best of our ability all
19 of what you and everybody across the country has
20 told us and what the data can reveal to see if
21 we can come up with something that is clear,
22 understandable, useful, and drives -- helps

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1 people drive choices by those important values
2 and characteristics. Not that we think that's
3 the whole story about how to make a choice about
4 where to go to college or where to get your career
5 training but because we think it's an important
6 and too often missing element.

7 Let me tell you some very practical
8 things about today so that we can get on to the
9 business of listening to you. We welcome all of
10 you who will be testifying and all of those of
11 you who, like us, want to listen. Many of you
12 have preregistered, and we will get going in a
13 moment. I'll just call you up and I'll signal
14 who's coming forward so that you can be ready and
15 take that deep breath before you speak.

16 People have been given five-minute
17 time slots. If you go shorter, that's fine.
18 And we would appreciate your keeping to that so
19 that we can hear from everybody who'd like to
20 speak. We will have time for walk-in testimony.
21 I'm sure that we will have time in the afternoon
22 and, if people are economical in the morning, we

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1 may have time to slip some of you in during the
2 morning as well. I see everybody, pretty much
3 everybody in back who wanted a seat has found
4 one, but feel free to get up and return during
5 the day. We won't consider that discourteous at
6 all.

7 Please understand that this is a
8 fairly formal structure that we have.
9 Frequently we would love to engage with you or
10 ask you more questions about your area of
11 expertise, but this format is not designed for
12 that, however tempting it may be to follow up
13 with you. So know that we would welcome your
14 written testimony to be filed at
15 collegefeedback@ed.gov. Again
16 collegefeedback@ed.gov. It's on the forms that
17 are outside.

18 And if you want to talk to us
19 directly afterward, let us know through that
20 college feedback site. And if we want to follow
21 up with you, if there's something that you said
22 that we think will help us understand more deeply

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1 than you were able to get into, know that we will
2 look for you and that we are going to draw on some
3 of the people we meet around the country for
4 follow-up focus groups and discussions and
5 kicking the tires of the process as it goes
6 forward.

7 Some basics. We're recording and
8 will transcribe everything that is said on the
9 testimony today. So you will have a chance if
10 you speak to see yourself in the transcript that
11 will be shared with the public. The people who
12 were not able to join us today or if you've chosen
13 not to speak in that fashion, we'd still welcome
14 you to tell us your views on
15 collegefeedback@ed.gov.

16 Housekeeping matters. We're not
17 going to take a break until lunch because we've
18 just gotten started. We will break from 12:30
19 to 1:30, and we will continue to receive
20 testimony until 5:00 this afternoon. So with
21 that, I'm going to begin calling on our
22 witnesses. And we sincerely appreciate your

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1 taking the time and thought to help inform this
2 important process.

3 With that, the first person we have
4 signed up is David Wilson from Morgan State.
5 Mr. or Dr. Wilson. Yes. There are two
6 microphones. You can use the one with the
7 podium or the one in the center of the room, take
8 your pick. And just for planning purposes,
9 you'll be followed by John Woodard, Tommy
10 Screen, and Dr. Walter Kimbrough.

11 DR. WILSON: First of all, let me
12 say to President Alexander it is indeed a
13 pleasure for me to be here at LSU, and I certainly
14 am enjoying the beautiful campus here. I saw
15 you last week, and I didn't think at the time that
16 I would be here, so it's a pleasure.

17 I basically just want to take a
18 minute or two and say a word or two about the type
19 of university that I lead. I'm president at
20 Morgan State University in Baltimore, Maryland,
21 and Morgan State University is a university with
22 about 8,100 students. We are an urban-serving

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1 doctoral research university. We were
2 established in 1867, so we've been around for
3 almost 150 years.

4 Of the 8,100 students that I have at
5 Morgan, 90 percent of them are on financial aid,
6 60 percent of them are on Pell Grants.
7 Thirty-five percent of those that are on Pell
8 Grants receive the maximum Pell Grant, and a
9 third of my students are first-generation
10 college students.

11 We do have at Morgan what we call,
12 however, a very, very strong value proposition
13 that is helping this nation to be competitive
14 today and going forward. We are number one in
15 the United States in producing black electrical
16 engineers, we are number three in producing
17 black industrial engineers, and we're number one
18 in producing black civil engineers. We're
19 number four in the United States in producing
20 black architects.

21 We're number three in producing
22 blacks who have doctoral degrees. Our good

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1 friend Howard University is number one,
2 University of Michigan is number two, and Morgan
3 State is number three. About 25 percent of our
4 students major in STEM fields, and 38 percent of
5 them go on to doctoral and professional schools.
6 That's the second highest percent in the state
7 of Maryland.

8 We also have the fourth lowest
9 tuition of all of the public universities in the
10 state of Maryland, and we have 24 percent of our
11 students at Morgan who are coming from families
12 making less than \$36,000 a year. And so at the
13 same time we have the highest debt amongst our
14 students in the state of Maryland because their
15 families simply cannot afford to contribute, in
16 the vernacular, one Lincoln penny to their
17 education.

18 And so every semester that I've been
19 at Morgan, almost four years, unfortunately I
20 have to send back home anywhere from 400 to 800
21 students. And I'm sending them home not because
22 they're not making good academic progress. I'm

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1 sending them home because they do not have the
2 thousand dollars, the \$1500, the \$2,000 or the
3 \$3,000 to enable them to continue.

4 Indeed in the fall of 2010, my first
5 semester at Morgan, I brought in 1100 freshmen,
6 and we had a retention rate at the sophomore
7 level of 74 percent. And I conducted a study as
8 to, well, what happened to those other students,
9 why aren't they back at the university. And 30
10 percent of those students were making fairly
11 good academic progress, but they did not come
12 back because they did not have the financial
13 wherewithal. And so if we had basically
14 had the financial aid to provide those students
15 with, my retention rate at Morgan would have been
16 right there with the University of Maryland at
17 College Park and right there, actually greater
18 than UMBC's.

19 So it's not as if we are not doing
20 innovative programs. It's not as if we are not
21 incorporating technology to the curriculum.
22 It's not as if we are not engaged in course

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1 redesign. The point is that we are embracing
2 some of the best practices on the instructional
3 side of the institution but what's getting in the
4 way of a higher retention rate and a higher
5 graduation rate is just simply the lack of
6 dollars.

7 And I would not want the lack of
8 dollars that students don't have to basically
9 punish institutions and students if, at the end
10 of this process, a major criteria will be
11 graduation rates for the institutions,
12 retention rates for the institutions. How do we
13 you get that which, as an institution, is out of
14 your control, which is getting monies in the
15 pockets of the parents and the students to
16 persist.

17 And so I want to applaud President
18 Obama's goal of making college education in
19 America more affordable, and to indeed holding
20 us as university presidents and chancellors
21 accountable for the kinds of results that we know
22 will spur America's innovation and

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1 competitiveness. It's just that I think we have
2 to understand the unique circumstances and the
3 unique missions of institutions across the
4 higher education landscape.

5 Before I became president at Morgan
6 I was the chancellor within the University of
7 Wisconsin system and oversaw 13 universities in
8 that system. And before that I was the
9 vice-president of Auburn University for 12
10 years, and then I was an associate provost at
11 Rutgers for eight or nine years. And all of
12 those institutions are very different. They're
13 different geographically; they're different in
14 terms of their reach.

15 And I just want this process to be
16 one where we're not necessarily inventing one
17 model and forcing all institutions into that
18 model. We at Morgan are very, very proud of our
19 value proposition. We do not aspire -- with all
20 due respect to my alma mater Harvard, we do not
21 aspire to be Harvard. We aspire to be Morgan and
22 to do a darn good job at it and to produce

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1 students who, when they get their sheepskins
2 from us, they're ready to walk across that stage,
3 grab that sheepskin, and get out of there and
4 represent this country with the highest level of
5 quality and that will spur innovation,
6 creativity, and good quality of life.

7 So those are my comments. I do note
8 that I do speak on behalf of many urban-serving
9 institutions, many institutions that absolutely
10 embrace an access admission; not open
11 admissions, access. It means that we admit a
12 lot of students based on promise, but we graduate
13 them based on merit. Thank you.

14 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much,
15 Dr. Wilson.

16 John Woodard.

17 MR. WOODARD: First of all, thank
18 you very much for being here. This means a lot
19 I think to the LSU community to host such an
20 event. My name's John Woodard, and I'm
21 president of the student body this year.

22 And let me first off start off by

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1 saying when I going into my senior year at high
2 school just 60 miles east, in Covington, I was
3 torn between LSU and Chapel Hill, University of
4 North Carolina, and I was being recruited to play
5 tennis. And when my parents sat down and looked
6 at the cost and the options, and on one hand is,
7 John, you can go to Chapel Hill for 30, \$40,000
8 or you can go to LSU for free. So my dad was
9 like, you'd better believe you're going to LSU.

10 So for me LSU's been a phenomenal
11 opportunity. When you look at the metrics,
12 access, affordability, and outcomes, it's very
13 exciting because I think these are areas in which
14 LSU performs pretty well. We do a great job of
15 keeping the cost low with the help of the TOPS
16 program here in the state of Louisiana.

17 Indebtedness is very low upon
18 graduation. I'll come out of here with zero
19 debt. And we place our students in pretty
20 high-paying jobs as evidenced by our mid-career
21 earnings are higher than that of Chapel Hill or
22 Michigan, as Dr. Alexander talks about quite

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1 frequently.

2 But not only is our tuition low but,
3 like I said, the TOPS program in our state is
4 essentially paying for nine out of every
5 in-state -- nine out of ten in-state students
6 here at LSU. Our state is investing a lot of
7 money in our families and students through that
8 program, which is great, it's essential, and I
9 think it's been phenomenal for the state and for
10 LSU.

11 However, the flip side is we're not
12 investing quite as much in our institutions. We
13 just simply can't afford to do so. So what
14 you'll see is we're not able to pay our faculty
15 and staff as much, our facilities start to wane.
16 So LSU is doing more with less with those access,
17 affordability, and outcomes.

18 And those are three things as a high
19 school senior I would have loved to have had that
20 information as opposed to just looking at the
21 initial cost of that first semester. I think
22 that would be crucial for any high school

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1 student, any family. They're going to want to
2 see that information to help them make a better
3 decision on where they're going to invest in the
4 next four years.

5 I'm really looking forward to see
6 what this proposal result will bring about. So
7 I think looking at and evaluating our states in
8 how they are investing in higher ed I think will
9 be crucial because each and every state is
10 different, and that's definitely true here in
11 Louisiana. So information and looking at how
12 our states handle that are going to be crucial
13 to I think the future of students and how they
14 evaluate their college choices.

15 But again I just want to thank you
16 for allowing me to speak, and thank you all for
17 being here. That's it. Thank you.

18 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you. We
19 appreciate your work.

20 The next speakers are Tommy Screen,
21 Dr. Kimbrough, and Stephanie Givens. And we
22 have -- you can use the podium or the microphone

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1 in the center of the room. Thank you.

2 MR. SCREEN: Good morning. Thank
3 you to the department for organizing this forum
4 so that we may communicate with you all about the
5 proposals to help combat rising college costs
6 and to help make college affordable for American
7 families.

8 I'm Tommy Screen, Director of
9 Government Relations at Loyola University in New
10 Orleans, and a double graduate of LSU. I'm
11 proud to be back on campus. Loyola University
12 is a private Catholic Jesuit institution in New
13 Orleans and has been there for over a hundred
14 years. I'd like to address some of the specific
15 ideas included in the Administration's new
16 policy proposal we are discussing today.

17 As one may guess, like most
18 ambitious policy initiatives, the devil is in
19 the details, and this proposal's details both
20 offer good and bad ideas. First I'd like to
21 point out two of the positive ideas included in
22 the President's plan, one of which, capping

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1 student loan payments to a percentage of the
2 borrower's income and promoting innovation and
3 competition through new grant programs, is also
4 an idea worth pursuing.

5 While these two good ideas are
6 certainly promising and worthy of further
7 exploration, there are two ideas included in the
8 proposal that are potentially problematic.
9 First I'd like to analyze the college rating
10 system proposed by the President. The idea of
11 providing families with as much information
12 about our institution as possible is one idea
13 that Loyola has no problem with. In fact,
14 transparency is a concept that I would argue the
15 marketplace demands from us already, and we are
16 happy to satisfy it.

17 With this in mind, a major concern
18 Loyola University has with the proposed rating
19 system is how the rating system will evolve and
20 on what data it will draw upon to come up with
21 the ranking. As currently proposed, there will
22 be three components that will make up the score

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1 an institution will receive. I believe one of
2 these components is hugely problematic.

3 Specifically the third and final
4 category of outcomes is one we believe is not
5 easily quantifiable. Unlike the first two
6 components of access and affordability where
7 hard data based on government facts and figures
8 will determine the score, the outcomes component
9 of the ratings proposal seems to be a much more
10 difficult number to accurately compute.
11 Specifically the graduate earnings portion of
12 this component is just one example of an
13 extremely complex figure to measure.

14 To help illustrate, please allow me
15 to use as an example a hypothetical graduating
16 Loyola senior. I will call her Molly. After
17 four years at Loyola University where she not
18 only was provided an excellent education in her
19 chosen major of business administration, she's
20 benefitted from various life experiences
21 organized by the university that helped to
22 educate her to think critically and act justly

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1 in the world in which she lives.

2 We are proud that at Loyola and the
3 other 27 Jesuit colleges in the United States we
4 try to educate the cura personalis or the whole
5 person in hopes that our graduates may very well
6 contribute to the betterment of society not only
7 inside but outside of a board room. With this
8 idea in mind, Molly decides that she will forego
9 accepting her job at the local investment firm
10 where she would have a starting salary of \$85,000
11 and instead will pursue a position with Teach For
12 America in Chicago where she will teach in an
13 underperforming school making \$40,000.

14 We would argue that this decision
15 based by Molly to teach is of more value to her
16 society in the short term than working at the
17 investment firm. However, under the proposed
18 rating system Loyola may very well lower on the
19 outcomes portion of the rating system than if
20 Molly had decided to take the job at the
21 investment firm.

22 With this situation in mind, I hope

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1 that it is apparent but the complexity
2 surrounding the value attached to graduate
3 earnings and how difficult it would be for the
4 department to base a rating system in part on a
5 very individualistic decision by our fictitious
6 20-year-old Molly.

7 Needless to say this scenario will
8 be played out year after year by thousands of
9 students across the country, and they may very
10 well unknowingly adversely impact their alma
11 mater's rating under the proposed rating system.
12 Are we so simplistic that now the value and
13 performance of our institutions may very well be
14 determined in part by our graduates' earnings?
15 I for one certainly hope not.

16 Finally I'd like to analyze the
17 concept of tying financial aid to the college
18 rating system that we just discussed. No
19 program is more important for making college
20 affordable for our students than Pell Grants and
21 the campus-based aid programs such as FSEOG and
22 Federal Work Study. I'd just like to take a

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1 short moment to commend the Administration for
2 their increase and support of the financial aid
3 programs that exist.

4 As we all know, these programs
5 provide access and opportunity to those students
6 who most need assistance. That is why the
7 linkage of the rating system to financial aid
8 eligibility is potentially troublesome. What
9 is the purpose of this linkage? Is it a
10 roundabout way to alter college and university
11 behavioral patterns on college costs? If so, I
12 believe that history has shown that artificial
13 price controls in this country are troublesome.

14 Is it an effort to limit the total
15 amount of federal student aid in the federal
16 budget? As I just stated, I don't think that's
17 the case given the Administration's past history
18 in supporting federal aid in their budget.
19 Needless to say, we feel that while the linkage
20 of financial aid to the proposed rating system
21 may originate from a noble idea, it would be
22 hugely problematic if ever implemented.

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1 In conclusion, I would urge the
2 department to reconsider their use of graduate
3 earnings in their rating system as well as tying
4 financial aid to this rating system. And again
5 in conclusion I'd like to thank you all for
6 coming. And I'm here on behalf of Father Kevin
7 Wildes, President of Loyola University. Thank
8 you.

9 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

10 As Dr. Kimbrough comes forward I
11 would just like to remind everybody who has
12 written their testimony that we would appreciate
13 getting that posted to collegefeedback@ed.gov.

14 Dr. Kimbrough.

15 DR. KIMBROUGH: Thank you. Good
16 morning. Let me begin by thanking the U.S.
17 Department of Education for offering this public
18 forum. My name is Walter Kimbrough, and I
19 enthusiastically serve as president of Dillard
20 University located in New Orleans.

21 The White House and the Department
22 of Education have been tremendous supporters of

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1 Dillard University. We've practically
2 completed our recovery from Hurricane Katrina,
3 a national disaster which caused over \$400
4 million in damages. This support has further
5 been seen throughout the HBCU community from the
6 Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act.

7 President Obama's goal is to have
8 the highest proportion of college graduates in
9 the world. The plan to make college more
10 affordable is a key initiative in reaching this
11 goal. But when the idea of a rating system was
12 introduced I became concerned. I authored an op
13 ed for Inside Higher Education on September 30,
14 which attempted to show that a fair rating system
15 has to account for the degree of difficulty each
16 individual institution faces based on the
17 demographics of their student body, as President
18 Wilson has noted.

19 But today let me take a different
20 approach. I understand the rising cost of
21 college. Bloomberg noted that since 1985, when
22 I was a college freshman at the University of

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1 Georgia -- sorry, King -- the cost of college has
2 risen 500 percent. My kids are seven and five.
3 I get it, but I am frustrated by the notion that
4 nonprofit colleges and universities are
5 responsible for controlling costs when they must
6 do business with entities designed to make lots
7 of money.

8 How am I supposed to control costs
9 when technology changes frequently and systems
10 we use constantly require new software and
11 training? What do I do when our health
12 insurance company comes to us just this past fall
13 with a 19 percent increase because last year they
14 paid out more in coverage than they received? I
15 assure you, when they collect more we don't
16 receive a rebate.

17 And heaven forbid a natural disaster
18 like Katrina. Our property insurance increased
19 from less than \$300,000 a year to over \$2 million
20 a year. Eight years later we still pay \$1.8
21 million in property insurance.

22 Costs are rising because Americans

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1 expect more security after Virginia Tech.
2 Colleges are frequent targets for lawsuits.
3 Higher education is already one of the most
4 highly-regulated industries with significant
5 reporting requirements. This new rating would
6 be on top of our already substantive
7 accreditation and assessment expenses.

8 So my boggled mind begins to wander
9 and wonder why no national forums discuss
10 controlling the cost of, say, incarceration?
11 Here we are in Louisiana, the incarceration
12 capital of the United States, the incarceration
13 capital of the world. A 2012 Vera Institute
14 study indicated we spend over \$31,000 per inmate
15 annually, or more than everything for a year at
16 Dillard. Louisiana spends enough in
17 incarceration that, if applied to Pell Grants,
18 would give every Louisiana Pell Grant recipient
19 almost three times as much Pell Grant funding as
20 they receive now.

21 The same is true when we think about
22 national defense. Every U.S. President, when

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1 inaugurated, swears to defend the Constitution
2 against all enemies, foreign and domestic. So
3 how can I get poverty on the list of domestic
4 enemies? How can I get unequal access to a
5 quality education on that list?

6 I reread the fact sheet on the
7 President's plan to make college more
8 affordable, subtitled "A Better Bargain for the
9 Middle Class." The middle class. An MSNBC
10 story listed ways to know if you're middle class.
11 These included making between 40 and \$100,000
12 per year, not 250. Since the median family
13 income is \$68,000 a year, the middle class saves
14 for college, goes on vacation, owns homes, has
15 secure jobs, and has health insurance. So if
16 this new rating system is focused on the middle
17 class, how will it impact schools like mine?

18 Yes, I have middle and upper middle
19 class students. But our average family income
20 is about \$31,500, less than half the national
21 median family income. Seventy-eight percent of
22 my students received a federal Pell Grant, one

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1 of the highest campus percentages in the nation.
2 If the original ideal does not even acknowledge
3 my campus, how can I expect it not to be harmful?

4 Higher education is being told to do
5 more with less. But when you already charge
6 half of the national average for private
7 colleges, as we do, with a small endowment and
8 lots of high-need students, essentially you're
9 telling me to do more with nothing.

10 The road to hell is paved with good
11 intentions. Without considering all of these
12 factors, it is clear what road we're on. Lots
13 of smart and well-meaning people will work on
14 this rating system, but recent history shows me
15 that this group will not be diverse and inclusive
16 enough to catch blind spots, like the recent
17 Parent PLUS Loan fiasco, and there will be
18 collateral damage.

19 My suggestion today is that if this
20 is absolutely necessary for a rating system --
21 and I still remain skeptical -- the widest, most
22 diverse group would develop it to attempt to

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1 avoid unintended consequences as I've outlined.
2 But my prayer today is that we properly resource
3 education, like we eagerly do prisons, instead
4 of continuing to look for a discount education.
5 Sure, we can do education cheaper, but it will
6 be cheap, which means in the long run it will be
7 more expensive.

8 (Applause.)

9 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much,
10 President Kimbrough.

11 Stephanie Givens, Beverley Hogan,
12 and Dr. Warmack are next.

13 MS. GIVENS: Thank you for hosting
14 this open forum on such a critical topic. And
15 thank you, President and Chancellor, for your
16 invitation to allow us to weigh in on this issue
17 that's future implementation will directly
18 impact our students, citizens, and higher
19 education system.

20 My name is Stephanie Givens, and I'm
21 the Director of Louisiana State University
22 Upward Bound Program, a TRIO Program. You'll

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1 hear from many TRIO Program representatives
2 today from around the state. College
3 preparation, student retention, and access to
4 higher education by reducing financial
5 barriers, which includes the vital role of Pell
6 Grants, are a key part of our mission.

7 As an Upward Bound director, I work
8 with low-income and first-generation students
9 from our local, persistently lowest-achieving
10 schools. LSU Upward Bound has a waiting list of
11 students wanting tutoring, ACT prep, mentoring,
12 exposure to colleges and careers and that
13 additional holistic care and motivation that
14 Upward Bound provides these students who are
15 full of potential and have a desire for a hand
16 up on how to get into college.

17 I had many concerns when reviewing
18 the new affordability plan but I don't have time
19 to discuss them with you today. It's basically
20 measures to create a ranking system that will
21 educate students on their best values. I'm
22 fearful that the ranking system will be a

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1 double-edged sword and it will reduce the amount
2 of financial aid for low-income students
3 depending on their school choice, and I'm
4 concerned it will limit their access overall.

5 To increase an institution's
6 ranking, they'll need higher graduation rates,
7 higher salaries earned after college, and
8 decrease the number of continuing degrees.
9 Then wouldn't the natural reaction to meet these
10 measures be to increase selectivity? Perhaps
11 even by turning away students that are eligible
12 to receive financial aid.

13 Since students from low-income
14 backgrounds are statistically less likely to
15 persist and might hurt institutional rankings,
16 so why take the risk? If institutions become
17 more selective, not by merit but by financial
18 status or first-generation status, in turning
19 students away to maintain rankings or a report
20 card score, then where are my students going to
21 go?

22 Define best value for me then. This

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1 is not advancing our country, creating new
2 educated citizens or new taxpaying families.
3 Best value for my students is location of the
4 school in reference to their home, if the school
5 has their major, if they feel comfortable on that
6 campus. Because remember, they're the first in
7 their family to attend. This is uncharted
8 territory with no one to guide them, unless
9 they're involved with something like TRIO.

10 Does the school offer night classes
11 so they can work to help support their family
12 during the day? Or does the campus offer child
13 care? I ask you again to define "best value" and
14 keep the student's best interest in mind when
15 developing your measures.

16 So, for example, Sarah was born in
17 Mexico but is now an American citizen. She's a
18 senior in high school, works a full-time job to
19 help support her family in the U.S. and back in
20 Mexico. She makes A's and B's and will likely
21 qualify for TOPS. And she wants to attend LSU.
22 But she is worried. She's highly concerned

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1 about financial barriers of college and the
2 choices she'll have to make when it comes time
3 to go into college. So what do you define as her
4 best values? How will LSU be measured, and
5 would Sarah still have a place at LSU, according
6 to its report card?

7 What about Addie? She has almost a
8 4.0 but struggles to break a 16 on the ACT, so
9 she may never qualify for TOPS. Addie is tired.
10 She was once homeless after fleeing an abusive
11 father. She is the only income for her family,
12 because both of her younger siblings live with
13 disabilities. So what college do you think is
14 her best value?

15 The plan to make college more
16 affordable, a better bargain for the middle
17 class, is likely to do just the opposite by
18 making it more challenging for many students to
19 gain access to the college of their choice, their
20 best value, which then may be less affordable
21 because of distance, lack of vital services, or
22 lack of aid.

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1 Please keep the students' best
2 interest in mind when you're making your final
3 decisions on this plan. Ensure that there's not
4 any loopholes for abuse. And remember,
5 education can be the great equalizer to build a
6 great, strong, and competitive nation.

7 (Applause.)

8 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you.

9 Beverley Hogan, Dr. Warmack, and
10 then Paris Woods. Is Ms. Hogan or Dr. Hogan
11 here?

12 (No response.)

13 Let's move on then to Dr. Warmack,
14 Paris Woods, and Rosalind Fuse-Hall. We'll
15 come back and see if she's available later. Is
16 Dr. Warmack here?

17 (No response.)

18 Okay. Paris Woods?

19 (No response.)

20 Rosalind Fuse-Hall.? Thank you very
21 much.

22 And then after that we'll have

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1 Joseph Givens and Lynette Denise-Bates.

2 DR. FUSE-HALL: President

3 Alexander, thank you for providing this
4 wonderful forum for us today. And good morning
5 to Deputy Secretary Shelton and other Department
6 of Education officials, as well as to my
7 colleagues from higher education. Thank you
8 for the opportunity to provide input on the
9 Administration's college affordability
10 proposal, and in particular the proposed college
11 rating system.

12 My name is Rosalind Fuse-Hall, and
13 I serve as the seventeenth president of Bennett
14 College in Greensboro, North Carolina. Founded
15 in 1873 as a co-educational institution to
16 advance newly freed slaves, both young and old,
17 we were reorganized in 1926 to celebrate,
18 educate, and empower women. For 140 years,
19 Bennett College has been educating women
20 nationally and internationally to become
21 leaders of their communities.

22 Since it was reorganized as a

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1 woman's college we have taken young ingénues and
2 converted them into competent women leaders and
3 civic leaders that have transformed the
4 communities they live in. Known as Bennett
5 Belles, these graduates have distinguished
6 themselves as mothers, lawyers, doctors,
7 teachers, librarians, actors, writers, and
8 social workers.

9 In the '60s, they joined the young
10 men from North Carolina A&T State University to
11 integrate the lunch counters of Woolworth's,
12 transforming this nation from one of segregation
13 to a better, integrated one. Recent graduates
14 have served in the Situation Room at the White
15 House, created their own nonprofits, and have
16 enrolled in graduate programs at prestigious
17 universities across this country.

18 Although the majority of our
19 students graduate from high schools with weak
20 college preparatory programs, we embolden and
21 educate these women to become college graduates
22 who lead wherever they're located. I offer this

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1 glimpse into the profile of our graduates
2 because I want to make their numbers on the score
3 card to represent the real lives that you will
4 impact by the policies that are forming a perfect
5 storm of divestment in the future of low-income
6 female and minority students.

7 Our graduates aren't boastful but
8 distinguish themselves with their commitment to
9 hard work, civic engagement, and providing a
10 voice for those that cannot speak for
11 themselves. Our graduates, like many from
12 women's colleges and HBCUs, provide the backbone
13 for this country. Thus it is difficult to
14 understand how we pretend to make college more
15 affordable by looking at institutional
16 performance as an outcome measure when these
17 policies ensure that access will be constrictive
18 and restrictive for those like my Bennett
19 College students.

20 It is difficult for me to comprehend
21 how students enrolled at Bennett College become
22 expendable, because further reductions in Pell

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1 Grants, eligibility restrictions in Parent PLUS
2 Loans and other financial aid will constrain the
3 opportunities for students to access, learn, and
4 grow as young adults.

5 Why educate a minority woman?
6 Well, she has graduated from high school at a
7 higher rate than her male counterparts. She is
8 more likely to graduate from college. She makes
9 the majority of the financial decisions in a
10 household, and she imprints the values and
11 attitudes on not just her siblings but her
12 daughters and sons, her nieces and nephews.

13 She is active in her communities and
14 churches. Despite the overwhelming
15 circumstances and media messages that belittle
16 her value to society, she overcomes these odds
17 and exudes confidence that infects others. She
18 is the glue that has held and continues to hold
19 this country together.

20 But for a Bennett College, where
21 would these students enroll? Larger campuses
22 have not enrolled these students. Community

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1 colleges and virtual colleges do not graduate
2 students at comparable rates as HBCUs. If we
3 are to remain globally competitive, then as
4 President Obama has now announced, we do need
5 substantially more college graduates by 2020.
6 We truly need all of our current colleges,
7 women's colleges, tribal colleges, military
8 service-oriented colleges, HBCUs,
9 religious-based, as well as those historically
10 white institutions in order to maintain our
11 global competitiveness.

12 Singapore's Biopolis houses the top
13 minds from around the globe, and while we're
14 trying to figure out how to cream the best off
15 the top of our specialized colleges and infuse
16 that cream into a few colleges, the rest of the
17 world is investing in a diverse group of
18 scholars. No American student is expendable in
19 this global knowledge-based economy.

20 I began my career as an academic
21 advisor for an African-American, Native
22 American, and Hispanic students at one of the

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1 highest performing Research I universities in
2 this country. Even among the best minority
3 students, with our office providing academic
4 support, internship opportunities, peer
5 advising, and workshops that provided accurate
6 information at timely intervals, the graduation
7 rates were very low for minority students. I
8 was told then that I was running a small HBCU
9 within that campus of about 3,000 students, with
10 just my students. Three thousand. Graduation
11 rates were similar to my current rates at Bennett
12 College, a real HBCU. When you create the
13 score card add a segment regarding academic
14 assistance for minority and non-traditional
15 students. Look at all the students, and not
16 just first time in college, for a complete
17 picture. Look at the return rate of stop-outs
18 to transfers to dropouts. Why are we saying
19 students can't have college debt, so they can
20 have mortgages, car loans, launch a business or
21 plan for retirement?

22 Without a college education none of

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1 the other things can occur. Without a college
2 education, all the funds intended for the bright
3 future of college students will become necessary
4 for assisting people without an education,
5 without jobs, or future.

6 Please review the impact of
7 decreased funding, state funding, to colleges
8 and universities, the recession's impact on
9 families with students entering college and the
10 rising cost of college. I think there's a
11 correlation. Help by lowering the cost of
12 technology. Help colleges by assisting older
13 campuses like mine with capital and
14 infrastructure grants. Implore businesses to
15 invest in HBCUs, women's colleges, and those of
16 us with less than 3,000 students. We need that
17 assistance, which lowers our operating expenses
18 and permits us to keep college costs lower.

19 If you value, and if you add value
20 to our campus, we will continue to increase
21 graduation rates, produce productive citizens
22 that own houses, start families, and secure jobs

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1 that they can retire from. Thank you.

2 (Appaluse.)

3 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

4 We appreciate all of your comments.

5 Joseph Givens, Lynette

6 Denise-Bates.

7 MR. GIVENS: Good morning. I thank
8 you for inviting us here to share our views, our
9 opinions, our concerns about this policy. I
10 thank President Chancellor King for helping host
11 this event. I know through conversation and
12 presentations that he's made that this is an
13 issue that's of the utmost importance to him, and
14 that makes me very happy.

15 For me the issue of access and
16 affordability is especially salient because
17 neither of my parents have a college education.
18 And we had very limited means. It was through
19 higher education that my family was able to
20 transition from poverty to academia, from the
21 trailer house to this great institution. But
22 this would never have happened if it wasn't for

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1 the Pell Grant, Upward Bound, and Student
2 Support Services.

3 I'm the Director of the LSU McNair
4 Scholarship Program, another TRIO Program that
5 prepares 33 low-income, first-generation, and
6 underrepresented students for Ph.D. studies. I
7 commend the President for his attention to the
8 issue of access and affordability. Because I'm
9 becoming increasingly concerned that because of
10 flat funding, federal budget cuts, ever-looming
11 sequestering, and budget negotiations that the
12 support structure for our low-income and
13 first-generation students is eroding.

14 For example, after January's
15 sequester cutting, which is more likely to go
16 into place, the Upward Bound program that I
17 graduated from at ASU Beebe, Arkansas, will have
18 the same budget that it had when I was in it,
19 which was in 1996. I fear that the families of
20 limited means who desperately want to obtain a
21 high education and join the middle class, like
22 I did, find themselves with fewer resources to

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1 achieve their goals than you and I had.

2 However, I'm skeptical about the
3 proposed plan in its current form, because it
4 proposes vast and sweeping changes, none of
5 which I think adequately address the real issue
6 of stagnant federal and state funding of
7 critical academic support services, like the
8 TRIO Programs.

9 Our students are the students who
10 arrive at college with the fewest resources,
11 require the most assistance, and have the most
12 to gain from their education. Their path
13 through higher education is perilous, and if the
14 Administration is serious about increasing the
15 retention and graduation rates of these
16 students, then it should make serious
17 investments in support systems to prevent these
18 students from dropping out.

19 I commend the President for
20 understanding that low academic progress is an
21 issue with the Pell Grant recipients. I, too,
22 want to ensure that our federal investment in an

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1 educated public is sound. However, I also want
2 to realize the potential in every eligible
3 McNair -- I mean Pell-eligible student, as well
4 as McNair students.

5 This plan includes the reasonable
6 accountability mechanism that if one is not
7 serious about completing their education, then
8 the bill should not be charged to the American
9 public. However, I worry that the plan does not
10 consider the benefit of academic support
11 investment that can help the students who are
12 serious about their education but need that
13 extra help.

14 I'm encouraged that the
15 Administration is here today to listen to
16 concerns of faculty, administration, and
17 students. I implore you to make a concerted
18 effort to reach out to the low-income and
19 first-generation students, both pre-college and
20 in college. These students are the ones that
21 will be the most acutely impacted by this
22 proposal.

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1 Sit down with some Upward Bound
2 students on Saturday, meet with some McNair
3 scholars at your local universities. They'll
4 tell you what's value to them and what their
5 needs are. You will also find out that they
6 don't know what's a good value, and they might
7 not know the best for themselves. And that's
8 where we come in as a responsible, informed
9 educator.

10 These students' problems are
11 varied, their needs are vast, but their goals are
12 the same. For example, if the best value
13 college for me is two hours away and I am a single
14 mother who would prefer her child to live near
15 her father, then it does me little good. Nor is
16 it of help to the student who needs to help their
17 family in the rice harvest if the college is two
18 hours away.

19 I recommend that the Administration
20 consider a ranking system of broad measures that
21 can be of use to both urban students and rural
22 students. One of the metrics that must be

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1 included is the economic and human capital that
2 a campus invests in academic support services
3 for under-represented students and
4 under-resourced students.

5 For example, at LSU, we have a Center
6 for Academic Success that provides every student
7 at LSU access to free tutoring, academic
8 counseling, both in-person and digitally,
9 online and through social media. Licensed
10 counselors in our university college advise
11 these students in their major choice and course
12 selection. And we have a number of programs on
13 this campus that support these students. These
14 should be valued.

15 Today I'm reminded that we're not
16 far from the forty-eighth anniversary of the
17 original Higher Education Act. I'm grateful
18 that President Johnson had the foresight to
19 understand that investment in college access
20 must be coupled with academic support services,
21 and I ask you to consider the same today. Thank
22 you.

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1 (Applause.)

2 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

3 Next is Lynette Denise-Bates. And
4 then the next speaker I believe is Dr. John Berry
5 from -- on behalf of Rosalyn Clark-Artis. Thank
6 you.

7 MS. DENISE-BATES: Well, Ms.
8 Studley, I'll tell you, life for me ain't been
9 no crystal stair.

10 Mr. Shelton, it has had tacks in it
11 and splinters, boards all torn up. Places with
12 no carpet on the floor, bare. But all the time
13 I have been a-climbing on and reaching length and
14 turning corners and sometimes going through the
15 dark where there ain't been no light.

16 So, John, don't you sit down on those
17 steps because you'll find it kind of hard. Dr.
18 Bell, don't you fall now, because I still going,
19 I still climbing, and life for me ain't been no
20 crystal stair.

21 We are here today as TRIO Programs
22 because we believe in postsecondary education

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1 for all. It's about access and opportunity for
2 all. So as the Department of Education and as
3 the President of the United States seek to rate
4 colleges and universities, let them not forget
5 that they must be coupled with resources and
6 services.

7 Resources and services are the very
8 programs that were birthed out of the Department
9 of Education through the Educational
10 Opportunity Act of 1964, such programs as Upward
11 Bound, Student Support Services, Talent Search,
12 Ronald McNair, Veterans Upward Bound, Upward
13 Bound Math-Science.

14 These programs provide academic
15 enrichment services, tutorial services,
16 financial guidance, cultural and social
17 literacy. And, yes, internships,
18 collaboration with businesses and et cetera.
19 We want better colleges. We want them to be
20 affordable. But they must be coupled with
21 services.

22 So as we seek to develop this plan

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1 for this great nation so that more will have
2 access to opportunity and postsecondary
3 education, don't forget to bridge the gap with
4 the very programs that were birthed through your
5 department: TRIO Programs, because TRIO works.

6 You tell us to pull up ourselves by
7 the bootstraps? Well, here are the straps, but
8 where are the boots? We challenge the
9 Department of Education to craft the boot with
10 TRIO Programs and with the community at large,
11 because TRIO works.

12 (Appaluse.)

13 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
14 And again is anyone has comments prepared, we
15 welcome you to submit them to
16 collegefeedback@ed.gov.

17 Our next presenter is Dr. John
18 Berry, and then we have Paul Eaton, and then if
19 we have time we'll see if we can accommodate some
20 of you before the break. And otherwise we will
21 see if you can be with us after the lunch break.

22 Thank you very much, Dr. Berry.

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1 DR. BERRY: I appear today on behalf
2 of Dr. Roslyn Clark-Artis, Interim President of
3 Florida Memorial University, a private
4 historically black university located in Miami
5 Gardens, Florida, and a proud member of the
6 United Negro College Fund.

7 The university is widely recognized
8 as the home of the National Negro Anthem, "Lift
9 Every Voice And Sing," which was composed by
10 James Weldon Johnson, and his brother John
11 Rosamond Johnson, while he was employed as
12 faculty at Florida Baptist Academy, now known as
13 Florida Memorial University.

14 In addition, the University is the
15 beloved alma mater of Barrington Irving, who
16 while a student at Florida Memorial University
17 set two historic aviation records. He was the
18 first person of African descent and the youngest
19 person ever to fly solo around the world.

20 Florida Memorial University has,
21 since 1879, remained true to its mission and
22 taken pride in its motto: Leadership, Character,

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1 and Service. In short, we seek to provide
2 access to a population of students who, but for
3 Florida Memorial University, may never have an
4 opportunity to earn an education, improve their
5 lives, and contribute in a meaningful way to
6 society.

7 It is out of concern for these
8 students that I address you today to express our
9 grave concerns about the proposed rating system.

10 While we are firmly committed to accountability
11 and transparency, we are deeply concerned about
12 the Administration's ability to develop a rating
13 system that is sufficiently nuanced to tease out
14 the often subtle differences within and among
15 institutions, particularly as it relates to
16 entering student characteristics and their
17 impact on traditional metrics of success.

18 Such a rating system can and very
19 likely will have a devastating impact on
20 institutions like Florida Memorial University
21 who serves predominantly first-generation,
22 low-income minority students. Graduation

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1 rates are often used to measure an institution's
2 performance and/or accountability. High
3 graduation rates are a proxy for institutional
4 quality. In fact, the federal government,
5 through its Student Right-to-Know and Campus
6 Security Act, makes it mandatory for
7 degree-granting institutions to make public
8 their graduation rates. However, two
9 independent studies by the Higher Education
10 Research Institute and the National Center of
11 Education Statistics determined that it is
12 unrealistic to expect uniform retention and
13 graduation rates for institutions.

14 The proper conclusion reached in
15 both studies is that a significant variation in
16 retention and completion rates among students is
17 almost entirely attributable to differences in
18 the entering student characteristics rather
19 than a measure of institutional quality.

20 In other words, the characteristics
21 of the entering class, the first-time freshmen
22 cohort, has a direct measurable impact on

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1 retention and graduation. The most relevant
2 variables impacting retention and completion
3 rates for the entering class were determined by
4 the National Center for Education Statistics
5 studies based on nationally representative,
6 longitudinal studies of college students.

7 This research has demonstrated that
8 high school academic preparation and measures of
9 socioeconomic status, such as family income,
10 parents' education or lack thereof, are highly
11 predictive of degree attainment in students.
12 Accordingly, it will be difficult if not
13 impossible to design a rating system that
14 controls for the social, economic, academic,
15 racial diversity that exists among our
16 institutions of higher education without
17 working a grave injustice on the institutions
18 committed to providing access to underserved
19 populations.

20 Blind adherence to bright-line
21 success measures, such as six-year graduation
22 rates, will no doubt force institutions to limit

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1 access to those students who can score high
2 enough on the demographic predictive list to be
3 worth the risk.

4 We stand with the Obama
5 Administration in its efforts to increase
6 affordability, including initiatives related to
7 Pell Grant performances for colleges like
8 Florida Memorial University, who enrolls and
9 graduates significant numbers of Pell-eligible
10 students. Nearly 85 percent of Florida
11 Memorial students rely on Pell Grants to
12 subsidize their college education.

13 We therefore implore the
14 Administration to resist restricting Pell
15 eligibility that has had a negative impact on
16 low-income students. For example, elimination
17 of summer Pell Grant eligibility has increased
18 attrition between spring and fall, lengthening
19 the time to degree for students who prefer and
20 very often need year-round engagement with their
21 college or university in order to be successful.

22 Consider the hallmark of higher

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1 education policy in the United States is access.
2 The Obama Administration has been clear in its
3 commitment to access, and we share that
4 commitment because we know that in order to meet
5 our global challenge we must expand access to
6 higher education opportunities and increase the
7 number of students who are eligible to achieve
8 their academic goals. That is, after all, a
9 historic legacy of historically black colleges
10 and universities.

11 However, the question that we must
12 not stop too short of answering is to whom are
13 we providing access? If we limit access to
14 those perceived to be the best and the brightest,
15 you are indeed on the path of least resistance.
16 To the contrary, most HBCUs are traveling on the
17 road less traveled, actively engaging those who
18 can perhaps be described as less promising.

19 We operate by necessity in the
20 thorny, dense thicket where students come to us
21 unprepared, socially and economically
22 disadvantaged, and burdened by social

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1 stereotypes and often carry emotional baggage.
2 The mantra of the HBCU, that is, "we do more with
3 less," and less is not limited to money.

4 You must ask yourself to whom do we want
5 to provide access? Does the student who comes
6 out of high school with a 2.5 GPA not deserve an
7 opportunity? What if that student worked 20 to
8 30 hours per week, was the primary caregiver for
9 two young siblings, and spent the majority of his
10 study time helping those siblings with their
11 homework rather than his own? What if that same
12 student has zero cultural capital or access to
13 resources, and does not know anyone who
14 graduated from college, much less attend? Or
15 what if --

16 MS. STUDLEY: I just invite you to
17 conclude your remarks shortly. Thank you.

18 DR. JOHN BERRY: I will do so.

19 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you.

20 DR. JOHN BERRY: Or what if the
21 academic productivity, or lack of, is primarily
22 environmental rather than intellectual? What

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1 does the student deserve? An opportunity to
2 catch up and matriculate at a college or a
3 university. Thank you.

4 (Applause.)

5 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
6 I appreciate it. Thank you all. Again we
7 welcome your full testimony at
8 collegefeedback@ed.gov.

9 Our last presenter today will be
10 Paul Eaton. Let me just say that we would
11 welcome the opportunity to hear from Jada Lewis
12 and Leslie Cole later this afternoon, if you'll
13 come to the back table when we break after Mr.
14 Eaton. And anyone else who has signed up
15 subsequently, we have plenty of time this
16 afternoon when we can accommodate you.

17 The note that I was just given is a
18 very gracious one. LSU has prepared a full
19 buffet for all of the guests, which will be
20 available across the hall in the hotel, and
21 you're welcome to come if you can and be the guest
22 of LSU momentarily.

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1 We'll hear from Mr. Eaton, and again
2 anyone who would like to join us this afternoon,
3 we will see if we can find the time slot that
4 works for you.

5 Thank you very much, Mr. Eaton, for
6 your patience.

7 MR. EATON: Thank you, ma'am. And
8 good afternoon. My name is Paul Eaton. I am a
9 third-year doctoral student in educational
10 research and leadership with a focus on higher
11 education here at Louisiana State University.

12 I have attended some of the best
13 public research universities in this country.
14 I received my bachelor's degree from the
15 University of Minnesota-Twin Cities, and my
16 master of education degree from the University
17 of Maryland at College Park. I've also worked
18 for almost ten years in two regional research
19 universities, the University of North Texas and
20 the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

21 I've committed my life to student success
22 in higher education, and I have some unique

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1 perspectives I'd like you to consider. My
2 perspectives today will speak to the role and
3 importance of public colleges and universities,
4 as well as student learning.

5 My biggest concern with the proposed
6 rating system rests in the unabashed embrace of
7 technocratic corporate competency-based
8 education. This is particularly problematic
9 from two perspectives.

10 First, the value of a college
11 education should not be tied solely to income
12 earnings. A college education is about more
13 than getting a high-paying job. The proposal
14 that part of the value equation for a college is
15 tied to graduate earnings holds the real threat
16 that degrees where or most graduates earn low
17 wages will simply be cut from the curricula of
18 colleges and universities as competition for a
19 high grade ranking increases.

20 If you think this eventuality won't
21 materialize, I'd ask you to talk to the academic
22 administration team at the University of

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1 Louisiana at Lafayette, where as recently as
2 three years ago low-completer programs, which
3 were deemed not valuable to the university, were
4 completely eliminated from the curriculum,
5 including important liberal arts programs and
6 critical thinking degrees such as philosophy.

7 Secondly, the proposed value rating
8 system essentially reduces the complexity of
9 higher education to merely quantifiable metrics
10 that only tell part of the story of the true value
11 of a university. Therefore, there must be more
12 holistic approaches to assessing the value of a
13 college experience beyond just degree
14 attainment and starting salary.

15 I urge you to include in your score
16 card and rating system a more robust measurement
17 of student learning. And this means more than
18 just average scores on standardized assessments
19 like the Collegiate Learning Assessment.
20 Learning is a complex, experiential process, and
21 the value of the learning experience cannot be
22 reduced to a standardized measurement or passing

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1 some competency-based test. This will
2 certainly not help our country be competitive in
3 the 21st century.

4 I'm asking you to consider these
5 more robust measurements, including qualitative
6 accounts of educational experience, because it
7 is evident that the rating system for systems of
8 higher education is going to be put in place by
9 this Administration. Therefore, we must work
10 to enhance the measuring of college value.

11 And finally we must invite
12 innovation, but not without understanding the
13 costs. This is particularly true regarding the
14 push for online education or reducing the time
15 to degree.

16 Researchers simply do not have the
17 empirical data necessary to support the
18 mythological proposition that online learning
19 is the panacea for the many problems in American
20 higher education. In fact, many studies
21 demonstrate that online learning only
22 exacerbates the many problems, including

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1 socioeconomic and racial divisions currently
2 present in higher education. Further, while
3 some courses might be taught well online, many
4 educational endeavors require more experiential
5 learning than is available online.

6 A similar case can be made for
7 blindly reducing the time to degree. Many
8 skills or outcomes we purport to value --
9 critical thinking, respect for diversity,
10 communication skills -- are cumulative and
11 achieved only through time, through dialogue,
12 engagement, and with experience.

13 So before we hyperbolize the cost
14 savings and innovation of institutions that have
15 embraced these models of education, let us
16 remember that it is not model that will work for
17 every student or every institution, and
18 therefore should not be forced upon
19 institutions, faculty or students. Rating
20 innovation in these arenas higher than other
21 forms of innovation could greatly impact true
22 student learning.

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1 The strength of our American higher
2 education system rests on the diversity of our
3 institutions, which serves the diversity of our
4 nation. We cannot reduce higher education
5 solely through a series of metrics that really
6 tell us very little about the quality of the
7 learning experience students receive. I
8 applaud your efforts to reduce college costs but
9 I ask you to please start being honest about what
10 is driving these costs and debt and work on
11 tackling those issues.

12 Education costs money, and with
13 increasingly reduced support from states, this
14 cost gets directly passed on to students. So if
15 you want to have an honest conversation about the
16 skyrocketing costs of college, I fervently
17 believe you need to start being honest about the
18 incredibly difficult decisions universities
19 have to make when there are large decreases in
20 state budget appropriations.

21 Let's lay more responsibility for
22 these increased costs directly at the doorsteps

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1 of the state legislatures and governors who
2 actually make these decisions. Thank you.

3 (Applause.)

4 MS. STUDLEY: Mr. Eaton, I can't
5 resist the temptation to tell you that you
6 clocked in at 4.59.4.

7 (Laughter.)

8 MR. EATON: I can't resist the
9 temptation to tell you that I have been
10 practicing for two days.

11 (Laughter.)

12 MS. STUDLEY: I know. This doesn't
13 come easy. That was very impressive. You
14 should do radio.

15 I want to thank, though, everybody
16 regardless of which side of five minutes you were
17 on. That was very, very helpful.

18 We're very pleased that so many of
19 you shared the broad, important goals with us.
20 And I would just like to say that we are sensitive
21 to the risks that you have laid out, working hard
22 on achieving positive and avoiding negative, and

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1 we appreciate the constructive suggestions.

2 I'm going to let Jim Shelton, the
3 Acting Deputy Secretary, close the morning.
4 And we will see you back here at 1:30 to start
5 the afternoon session.

6 DR. SHELTON: I'm going to thank you
7 by letting you go get some food. Appreciate all
8 of the comments.

9 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you. If you
10 wanted to speak and don't yet have a time slot,
11 just check at the back table.

12 (Whereupon, the above-entitled
13 matter went off the record for lunch.)

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A-F-T-E-R-N-O-O-N S-E-S-S-I-O-N

MS. STUDLEY: Welcome. We're going to pick back up for our afternoon session. I'm still Jamie Studley, and I'm joined here by my colleague Matt Valerius with the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Program Development at the Department of Education.

Our colleagues who were with us this morning have gone to some of the other smaller sessions, roundtable sessions that I mentioned to you this morning as we fan out and meet and talk with people and listen to you in different kinds of formats.

In the interest of time and hearing from you, I'm not going to repeat the introductory comments that we made this morning. I think most of you were here. We do have some materials outside if you didn't get our overview that would frame the issues -- we literally call them the framing documents -- that would put you

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1 into the picture. So we would -- and that would
2 allow us to move right along.

3 We will incorporate the people who
4 have walked in and volunteered to participate as
5 well. The first three people whom we have
6 signed up at this point are Victoria Matherne,
7 I may be mispronouncing that one, Mark Nemas, and
8 Billy Clark.

9 So Ms. Matherne, are you here?

10 (No response.)

11 Okay. Just a moment. Let me also
12 check back. There were some -- some of the
13 people who tell us that they would like to -- that
14 we think are saying they'd like to testify were
15 actually just RVSP'ing that they plan to attend.
16 So don't hold it against them, if you know them,
17 that they have stepped out of a commitment.

18 But just in case, Beverley Hogan,
19 Dr. Warmack, or Paris Woods are with us, if you
20 would identify yourselves, we will make time for
21 you this afternoon and your view here.

22 (No response.)

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1 No. Okay. Mark Nemas. Thank you
2 very much. And you can speak from either one,
3 it's up to you.

4 DR. NEMAS: Good afternoon,
5 everybody. That's a post-lunch response if
6 I've ever heard one. So thank you for the time.

7 My name is Mark Nemas, and I'm
8 President/CEO of Eduventures, which is actually
9 a Boston-based research advisory firm which
10 works with 400 higher education institutions and
11 others who serve them, foundations and agencies,
12 basically navigate the current constraints of
13 higher education and figure out what's next. We
14 do that particularly in the areas of recruitment
15 and retention, online and academic program
16 development so that those institutions might
17 better serve their students as well as society
18 at large.

19 So I come here because
20 serendipitously I happen to be working with
21 colleagues at LSU as well as University of South
22 Alabama this week, and I thought it would be a

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1 good opportunity to speak on the score card,
2 because in addition to the research we've done
3 as a firm as well as the visits I have with
4 leaders, I happen to be a former academic myself,
5 having focused on the societal role of higher
6 education and political development.

7 And it's with that lens, actually
8 all three of those lenses, our research, my
9 conversations with leaders around the country,
10 as well as some historical perspective, that I
11 want to offer a few thoughts, three thoughts and
12 two very specific cautions with regards to the
13 rating system.

14 The first thought is that one thing
15 we have to keep in mind, and to be honest I feel
16 it's being missed in this conversation, is the
17 extent to which the nontraditional learner,
18 those who are 25 to 44, returning to school are
19 the new majority. Everything in this
20 conversation tends to center around the 18- to
21 24-year-old. That's where we hear this myth
22 about U.S. falling behind in degree completion.

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1 Yes, we are falling behind in degree
2 completion for 18-to 24-year-olds. But
3 actually, if you look at the OECD data correctly
4 and incorporate 25- to 44-year-olds, the U.S.
5 still maintains that leadership position. In
6 fact, we are the world leaders in adult
7 education. And yet somehow that is missed in
8 the conversation.

9 Secondly in that regard, I want to
10 talk about this issue of cost. It's not a cost
11 concern, it's a value concern, and there is real
12 concern there. As we do studies of college
13 graduates, what's notable is that that concern
14 is related to the amount of debt they take on.
15 But what's interesting is that there's actually
16 a tipping point.

17 We've recently done a study looking
18 at the amount of debt students have taken on and
19 whether they believe their college degree was
20 worth the money. The tipping point is \$20,000.
21 Unfortunately, the average debt load now is
22 \$24,000, if not more. How much of a tipping

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1 point? If you took on between 10- and \$20,000
2 worth of debt, only 15 percent of students said
3 the degree wasn't worth the cost. Once you got
4 over 20- it was 56 percent.

5 So this question of value has to be
6 considered, and that's where aspects of
7 technology and thinking of technology not as a
8 cost center but instead as a way of expanding
9 access as a multi-channel institution is
10 critical.

11 Additionally, I think it's also
12 important to note my third point is that as we
13 are thinking about this concept of value, the ROI
14 that individual students are calculating, as are
15 their parents, utility is at the forefront. We
16 do the single largest survey of rising college
17 juniors or high school juniors and seniors, and
18 what we found is that for the first time
19 ever -- and we've been doing this survey now for
20 20 years -- is that job preparation is the single
21 biggest driver and determinant in college
22 choice. More than academics, more than campus

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1 environment, which are second and third, and
2 more than affordability. And even during the
3 great recession, that was not what we were
4 seeing. But -- and these are my
5 cautions; they're twofold -- we cannot assume
6 this moment in time where we're focusing on
7 utility is everything we need to pivot higher
8 education around. And that is where I get
9 concerned with the metrics that are being
10 proposed.

11 Why? Well, first and foremost, as
12 Dr. Wilson said in the very first speech, the
13 diversity of approach that American higher
14 education has taken is our greatest strength.
15 And I think there's a fundamental misreading of
16 history if we move to standardization.

17 I know the President in his -- in one
18 of the debates referenced the Morrill Act as a
19 great standardized approach. But in fact the
20 Morrill Act was a great diversified approach.
21 The Morrill Act -- not to get too much into a
22 history lesson -- actually were grants of land

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1 that the states could sell at their discretion
2 and set up institutions that had the broad
3 mandate of supporting education and the applied
4 and mechanic arts.

5 But notably it led to such diverse
6 institutions as Michigan State and Penn State,
7 which are traditional land grant schools, but
8 Cornell in Ithaca, and in fact the state
9 legislature of Connecticut basically used the
10 grant to set up the Sheffield Scientific School
11 at Yale. Diversity of approach has always been
12 our greatest strength, and it's something that
13 any rating scheme has to take into account.

14 And then lastly and most
15 fundamentally is that when we are talking about
16 outcomes, yes, we need to be discussing outcomes
17 because we can no longer take the leap of faith
18 that by simply having more access or better
19 curriculum and faculty that we're going to get
20 the best outcomes. But with talking about
21 outcomes, if we are only thinking about
22 individualized outcomes, we are completely

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1 underserving what higher education means for
2 this country.

3 In a very Tocquevillian
4 perspective, higher education is the single
5 biggest determinant of civic capital. Right?
6 All the political science literature shows that
7 likelihood to vote, likelihood to volunteer,
8 likelihood to be engaged in your community is
9 determined not by income but by level of
10 education.

11 And if we're only talking about
12 higher education in terms of what the individual
13 benefit is in terms of their career and their
14 earnings, we're basically not calculating some
15 of the largest aspects of that investment and why
16 American higher education has been a world
17 leader and needs to continue to be one going
18 forward. Thank you for the time.

19 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

20 Billy Clark is the next person that
21 we have on the list, and then Debbie Hollier and
22 Kristin Boyer.

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1 MR. CLARK: First I appreciate the
2 opportunity to address the subject which,
3 unfortunately, I feel has not yet been
4 addressed. You know, the topic for the open
5 forum is how to achieve affordability,
6 accountability, and transparency in our
7 education. I've heard a lot of reasons why we
8 shouldn't do it, but I haven't heard many as to
9 why.

10 I do agree with most of the speakers
11 that to put together a rating system and base
12 Title IV or additional financial aid to students
13 on the rating system will do more harm than good.
14 It will limit opportunity for the very students
15 the programs were designed to help in the first
16 place, because we all know there's really --
17 there are controllable factors for graduation,
18 and those are socioeconomic circumstances as
19 well as family history. And, unfortunately, we
20 can't control for that as we need to, but then
21 that denies opportunity for the students that
22 the programs were designed to serve in the first

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1 place.

2 So now that I agree with everybody,
3 let's go to some proposed solutions. I guess I
4 should tell you who I am first. I am Billy
5 Clark, I am president and owner of Delta Junior
6 College here in Baton Rouge and several other
7 small for-profit colleges in Louisiana and
8 Florida.

9 And as a for-profit college we are
10 concerned with affordability and accountability
11 and transparency. And our accrediting agencies
12 have already addressed these issues. Matter of
13 fact, the federal government has already
14 addressed these issues.

15 I see in the President's fact sheet
16 that he mentions the College Navigator, the
17 College Scorecard, the College Affordability
18 and Transparency Center. Have any of you been
19 to the College Affordability and Transparency
20 Center? My point exactly. Neither have any of
21 your students. Most of the information we're
22 talking about to allow consumers to make wise

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1 choice is already there but they don't know it.

2 So the challenge is how do we get
3 that information into the hands of the consumer.
4 Well, in my sector of the industry, the
5 for-profit college sector, we have been mandated
6 by federal law to comply with gainful employment
7 rules. I'm not sure any of you are familiar with
8 that either from the public non-profit sector.

9 The gainful employment rule
10 disclosure are very good. We must disclose how
11 much it will cost you to graduate from this
12 program for our average students, how much time
13 you will spend in this program in order to
14 graduate, what percentage of our students that
15 start actually graduate on time, at 150 percent
16 point of the normal length, and 200 percent of
17 the normal length.

18 The College Navigator, already a
19 federal program, does that already for the
20 colleges. For every accredited college in the
21 country you can find that information about that
22 college on the College Navigator web site. It's

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1 reported every year through IPEDS, but it's on
2 the college as a whole, not program.

3 You know, I believe that what the
4 President's goals are with affordability,
5 accountability and transparency, from what I
6 read, is to give the consumer the information
7 they need to make a wise choice. And that's what
8 I propose here. I do not have time to go into
9 all the details. Like I said earlier, I have a
10 hard time saying my name in five minutes.

11 But I have put together just a short
12 spreadsheet, things that I've heard from my
13 students as to what they are interested in as far
14 as to make a decision about what college to
15 choose.

16 My students are interested in how to
17 get a job with this when I'm done, how much is
18 it going to cost me, you know, can I start now.
19 Those are the type of information consumers want
20 and need to make a good decision. You know, a
21 philosophy major wants to major in philosophy.
22 But if they think they're going to get a job with

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1 a bachelor's degree, they need to know the facts
2 and they're really not. It needs to be
3 disclosed to them up front.

4 So with those disclosures, I really
5 think the crux of the matter is having the
6 communication. And I've just not kept up with
7 my time, but I will try to do this really quickly.
8 At the very end of, near the end of the proposal
9 is how do we communicate this information to the
10 consumer.

11 Number one, I would suggest -- oh,
12 there it is. I would suggest the comparison
13 chart, that every college and university should
14 provide on their home page a chart that compares
15 each in their majors and how they stack up to
16 those factors. How long will it take me to
17 graduate, if I progress normally how much will
18 it cost me, and what are my chances of employment
19 after I complete this degree. That's pertinent
20 information that they should have to make a wise
21 decision. It should be on the home page of every
22 college and university in America.

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1 Second, I think the gainful
2 employment style disclosures are very, very
3 good. They need to be expanded, they're still
4 not strong enough. Coming from a college, you
5 probably don't expect to hear that, but they are
6 not strong enough. They do not give a consumer
7 all the information they need. I would like to
8 see that strengthened. I have some suggestions
9 again.

10 But once they're strengthened, that
11 same information on the comparison chart should
12 be included on the program description page of
13 each college and university's web site. So when
14 you do get to your program you can see from your
15 program what my chances are of graduating, what
16 my chances are of employment, and how much is
17 this going to cost me.

18 I don't know about you guys, but I've
19 had kids in college and graduates, and I still
20 don't know how much they paid for it. And
21 they're finished. It would be really nice to
22 have an idea when they get started how much I'm

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1 going to have to outlay before this is over.

2 And then third, because I believe
3 the mechanism for collecting this data already
4 exists, we should promote that. Again, all
5 colleges and universities should be required to
6 put a link to the National Center for Education
7 and Statistics, which takes you to the College
8 Navigator web site, which does disclose that
9 information on the college as a whole.

10 And then with that College
11 Navigator, it can be configured to show
12 programmatic data as well. Again the
13 methodology is already in place. IFS report is
14 done again by every accredited college and
15 university in America and could be expanded to
16 have programmatic data.

17 And last, I want to address
18 affordability and debt measures.

19 MS. STUDLEY: Okay, that's fine,
20 but would you do it briefly? Thank you.

21 MR. CLARK: Okay. The reason
22 students are so far in debt and borrow so much

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1 is because they can. It's pretty simple. It's
2 too available and too easy and consumers have not
3 wisely chosen to have that much debt. There are
4 options. And let me just put it this way,
5 because I am out of time.

6 I have four points of how best to
7 encourage less borrowing from an institutional
8 perspective and from a consumer perspective.
9 And I have delivered those already, so I am out
10 of time and I will stop.

11 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
12 And we do appreciate your engaging with the
13 questions.

14 That was Mr. Clark. Debbie Hollier
15 is next. Then Kristin Boyer and Richard Fossey.

16 Ms. Hollier? Thank you.

17 MS. HOLLIER: Hi. My name's Debbie
18 Hollier. I'm the Director of Student Support
19 Services here at LSU. And many of you have seen
20 our colleagues in the rain who are TRIO Programs
21 from across the state, and we appreciate them
22 coming. We do think that we bring a unique

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1 perspective to this forum and to you.

2 I do want to address something about
3 that. I do want to say something to Ivory, and
4 I'm going to ask you to pass it on. He reminded
5 me how long I've been with TRIO, because Ivory
6 was a student worker in junior division here on
7 campus when I started with TRIO 20 years ago. So
8 make sure you tell him I said hello.

9 In addition to being the director of
10 Student Support Services, I am a licensed social
11 worker. And anyone who knows anything about
12 social work understands that social work focuses
13 most often on the systems approaches, be it to
14 looking at issues that are educational, moral,
15 behavioral, political, everything. And I want
16 to encourage the committee that will be
17 developing the metrics for evaluating
18 institutions to utilize the systems approach.

19 And I'm hopeful about that because
20 you're doing these forums and you're doing these
21 other meetings and you're looking at things, and
22 I think that speaks well. That being said, I am

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1 a director of the U.S. Department of Education
2 program, grant program, and so I have personal
3 knowledge that often policy and procedures don't
4 always translate well into practice.

5 And so as you're preparing I would
6 like for you to think beyond the theories and the
7 matrixes and look at specifically what potential
8 unexpected outcomes will be. And there will be,
9 as I think many of my colleagues have said today,
10 unexpected and unintended outcomes.

11 Like many of my TRIO colleagues, I
12 have some concerns about the proposed plans.
13 The reality that as a result of the situation in
14 K-12 education, the students coming into higher
15 education are not as well prepared, and I don't
16 mean just academically. Many of them are
17 extremely well prepared academically. That's
18 not across the board. It certainly very seldom
19 relates to my students who are low-income and
20 first-generation. They're not well prepared
21 academically very often.

22 I think that's a consequence that we

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1 in education and especially in your offices have
2 to look at, how can we change that. But the
3 bottom line of that is also they're not specially
4 behaviorally well prepared, and they don't have
5 a sense of self-efficacy that promotes or
6 projects into higher education. So there's a
7 lot of factors there.

8 Okay. My target population has
9 already been impacted by this K-12 because
10 they're at schools that are failing most often.
11 If they're low-income, they can't afford to go
12 to the private schools and the Christian schools
13 and the other opportunities, and so they already
14 come in behind.

15 And then some of the concerns that
16 I have are about the access and what access is
17 going to happen. I mean you've already heard
18 that this morning, I don't need to restate the
19 obvious here. I think you already know that.
20 But I do want to just say it is a concern.

21 I think that we have to be careful
22 that we're not changing the face of the higher

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1 education institutions because they have to
2 somehow start meeting these targets that are
3 higher to continue to serve students. And as
4 you heard this morning, they have to then limit
5 their admissions to students who are already
6 functioning, and if our students are not
7 functioning because they didn't get it in K-12,
8 we have to do something about that.

9 I was a first-generation college
10 student. Within a couple of years before I
11 started college, I would have been considered
12 low-income. My father just happened to get a
13 really good opportunity right before I graduated
14 from high school, and those things changed. So
15 I know what my students are coming into. I know
16 where they're coming from. I know that if I had
17 had Student Support Services I wouldn't have
18 been introduced as Miss Hollier, I would have
19 been introduced as Dr., because I know that I
20 would have done that, but I wouldn't know how and
21 I didn't have the resources, and I didn't have
22 anybody to tell me how.

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1 We have a responsibility as
2 educators to explore how we can provide not just
3 access to all students, not just the middle
4 income students or upper income students but to
5 all students. That will give them the best
6 opportunity to develop the resources and skills
7 that they have within them.

8 Because what if we deny access to the
9 person who might have cured AIDS or who might
10 have created our next important fuel for our
11 country or the world, or who might cure cancer
12 because we denied them access by creating -- oh,
13 how were they described earlier -- metrics that
14 is limiting and limits educational
15 institutions.

16 While we at LSU are very lucky -- we
17 have wonderful services for our students on this
18 campus, the Center for Academic Success, the
19 University college counselors, the career
20 center, we have great services for all of our
21 students.

22 They can't do everything, and the

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1 reality is that my target group needs services
2 beyond what those organizations can provide.
3 They need somebody that they can interact with
4 personally, somebody they can create a
5 relationship with that's more one on one. And
6 we have to look at not just providing them the
7 money, because the money without the support is
8 wasted money too often.

9 So as you are looking at this plan
10 don't just consider the financial aspect as far
11 as their financial aid. Please also consider
12 what is it that you or that we must provide them
13 so that we are investing in our economy and
14 investing in our students. Thank you.

15 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you so much.

16 Kristin Boyer, and then Richard
17 Fossey and Joe Gipson.

18 MS. BOYER: First thank you to the
19 department for the opportunity to provide
20 comments to this open forum, and to LSU for
21 graciously hosting it.

22 My name is Kristin Boyer, and I serve

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1 as the Director of Philanthropy for Texas
2 Guaranteed, a nonprofit company with origins in
3 the federal student loan programs that now
4 offers resources to help students and families
5 plan and prepare for college, learn the basics
6 of money management, and repay their federal
7 student loans.

8 The perspective I offer today though
9 is primarily shaped by our work as a grant maker
10 and all that we're learning through TG's
11 philanthropic investments in higher education
12 institutions, school districts, and nonprofit
13 organizations working in college access
14 education.

15 We commend the President and First
16 Lady and the Department of Education for their
17 efforts to bring attention to issues of
18 postsecondary aspirations, access,
19 affordability, and completion. Improving the
20 number of degrees and certificates is essential
21 to our nation's continued vibrancy and
22 viability.

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1 The President and the Department of
2 Education are right to center this discussion on
3 costs, as affordability is still the biggest
4 barrier that students and families cite when
5 they think about higher education. But if
6 there's one resounding lesson we have learned
7 from the \$46 million we've invested in grants for
8 college access and success it's that the
9 question of college affordability must also
10 consider the quality of the student experience.

11 It's pointless to focus on sticker
12 price to out-of-pocket costs or financial aid in
13 a vacuum. If aid is not combined with adequate
14 access to services and information, students are
15 much less likely to finish the credentials that
16 they start. Many of the most successful efforts
17 that TG has supported rely on peer or near-peer
18 mentoring and advising to produce performance
19 and completion rates.

20 In fact, one of the most recent
21 examples comes from Amarillo College, a
22 community college in the Texas Panhandle, which

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1 has combined scholarship support from the area
2 foundation with near-peer mentoring support
3 funded in part by TG. In just one year of the
4 program, the fall-to-fall retention rates for
5 scholarship recipients increased by nearly 50
6 percentage points.

7 Mentoring programs, financial
8 literacy information, intrusive advising,
9 supplemental instruction, early-alert systems,
10 college success courses, and required
11 orientation programs are all now recognized as
12 evidence-based practices that lead to student
13 success.

14 If colleges are to be rewarded,
15 rated or incentivized through use of federal
16 dollars, it will be important to equip campuses
17 with the knowledge and resources to improve
18 their completion outcomes. And completion
19 outcomes remain one of the strongest correlating
20 factors for determining the likelihood of
21 student loan default.

22 Of all student loan borrowers who

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1 had default claims paid by TG in fiscal year
2 2013, 64 percent had withdrawn from their
3 institution without earning a credential.
4 Their stories are perhaps the most disheartening
5 of all. These students believed in the
6 possibilities of college, they applied, were
7 accepted and enrolled, and then something fell
8 apart for them.

9 Their experiences speak to the need
10 to understand college completion as the
11 culmination of a continuum. Curriculum
12 alignment systems, expectations, teacher and
13 faculty engagement, and nonprofit supports all
14 contribute to students' and families'
15 aspirations and understanding about how to
16 navigate to and succeed in college.

17 The department is in a critical and
18 opportune position to catalyze these elements.
19 Absent a concerted effort to inform and serve
20 students across the educational continuum,
21 offering pay-as-you-earn or income-based
22 repayment plans won't affect borrowing, cost, or

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1 completion rate.

2 Since it was created in 1979, TG has
3 recognized the essential function of
4 partnerships in student success. We have valued
5 our collaborations with the Department of
6 Education. We've established productive
7 relationships with the higher education
8 community, and we now have rewarding
9 interactions with other funders working in
10 education.

11 There are countless examples in our
12 home state that support the strategies promoted
13 through the President's plan to make college
14 more affordable. On behalf of TG's grantees in
15 the postsecondary access and success arena,
16 along with the education funders in Texas, we
17 would invite continued discussion with the
18 department about what's working and how it can
19 help serve the President's goals to ensure
20 America's future.

21 Again, TG commends the department
22 for its thoughtful approach to gathering

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1 feedback through this forum, and we look forward
2 to the opportunities ahead to help greater
3 numbers of students and families succeed in
4 their educational career goals.

5 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much,
6 Ms. Boyer.

7 I just want to repeat my public
8 service announcement. If you have prepared
9 testimony, we would very much encourage you to
10 submit it to collegefeedback@ed.gov. Or if you
11 are not testifying but want to share your
12 comments there, we would really welcome that.

13 Next will be Richard Fossey, Joe
14 Gipson, and then Eric Atchison. Mr. Fossey.

15 MR. FOSSEY: Thank you. My name is
16 Richard Fossey, I teach higher education law at
17 the University of Louisiana at Lafayette.

18 I am opposed to a federal ranking
19 system for colleges and universities.
20 Universities know how to game the system and make
21 themselves look better without changing the core
22 way they do business. I've seen how colleges

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1 have manipulated their statistics to make
2 themselves look better in the U.S. News & World
3 Report rankings.

4 If a federal ranking system is
5 imposed, universities will simply hire
6 consulting firms and another level of
7 bureaucrats to manage their reports. College
8 costs will not go down, they're likely to go up
9 even faster than they are now.

10 I have three straightforward
11 proposals that will help lower college costs and
12 ease the plight of millions of overstressed
13 student loan debtors. First, the federal
14 government should kick the for-profit colleges
15 out of the federal student loan program. The
16 for-profits enroll about 11 percent of all
17 postsecondary students, and they take 25 percent
18 of the federal student aid money, about \$35
19 billion a year. They are more expensive than
20 public institutions.

21 According to Senator Tom Harkin's
22 report on for-profit colleges, 96 percent of

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1 students who attend for-profits borrow money,
2 and only slightly more than half ever obtain a
3 degree or a certificate. The for-profits
4 student loan default rates are very high.
5 According to DoE's most recent report, one out
6 of five students who attended a for-profit
7 college default on their student loans within
8 three years of beginning the repayment phase.

9 Why not take the \$35 billion the
10 federal government is spending to profit
11 for-profit colleges and invest it in community
12 colleges, which offer good-quality instruction
13 at affordable prices?

14 I suggest that community colleges
15 that receive federal money pledge not to
16 participate in the federal student loan program
17 at all, a policy that some community colleges
18 already practice. Low-income students
19 eligible for Pell Grants would see their federal
20 dollar stretch much further if they attended a
21 community college instead of a for-profit
22 college.

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1 Second, according to the Consumer
2 Financial Protection Bureau, about 15 million
3 people in the repayment phase of their loan
4 obligations are not making payments. About six
5 million are in default, and about nine million
6 are not making payments because they have
7 economic hardship deferments or some other
8 federal forbearance.

9 Many people who aren't making
10 payments are destitute, and they should have
11 access to the bankruptcy courts. I propose an
12 amendment to the federal bankruptcy laws that
13 allow insolvent student loan debtors to
14 discharge their student loans in bankruptcy if
15 they can prove they are destitute and if they
16 file in good faith.

17 Third, I think one reason college
18 costs have risen faster than inflation in the
19 last 30 years is that our university leaders have
20 developed an imperial mentality.

21 Many university boards and
22 university presidents operate in secret while

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1 executive salaries have reached excessive
2 levels. LSU was embarrassed recently by the
3 sight of parish sheriff's deputies serving
4 subpoenas to get LSU's records pertaining to its
5 last presidential survey. LSU arrogantly
6 refused to comply with Louisiana's open records
7 law.

8 So I propose a federal open records
9 law that requires all colleges and universities
10 to make all their records available to the
11 public, including records that pertaining to
12 executive compensation, hiring practices,
13 affirmative action plans, and admission
14 policies. Under the proposed law any
15 university that fails to comply with the federal
16 open records law would immediately lose federal
17 funding.

18 Of course there are other reforms
19 that need to be enacted. The federal government
20 should be barred from garnishing the Social
21 Security checks of elderly student loan
22 defaulters, which the federal government has now

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1 permitted to do.

2 Federal student loan debt
3 collectors should be required to abide by state
4 consumer protection laws. And people who are
5 ripped off by their for-profit colleges should
6 be able to sue those institutions for fraud and
7 misrepresentation in state courts.

8 But the key reforms are these. One,
9 get the for-profit colleges out of the federal
10 student loan program. Two, amend the
11 bankruptcy laws to allow destitute student loan
12 debtors to discharge their student loans through
13 bankruptcy. Three, require all colleges and
14 universities participating in the federal
15 student loan program to abide by federal open
16 records laws.

17 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you.

18 Joe Gipson, it's your turn. Mr.
19 Gipson, interested in speaking? Okay.

20 Let me just go back to the people who
21 hadn't. I suspect they're not sitting here and
22 waiting. Beverley Hogan, Dr. Warmack, and

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1 Paris Woods.

2 (No response.)

3 Okay. Eric Atchison, it's your
4 turn. And then Jada Lewis and Robert Carmouche
5 will be next.

6 MR. ATCHISON: Good afternoon.
7 I'm Eric Atchison, and I work for the Mississippi
8 Board of Trustees for State Institutions of
9 Higher Learning. We service more than 80,000
10 students across eight public universities.
11 Additionally I serve as our head state
12 coordinator for 34 public and private two-year
13 and four-year institutions in Mississippi.

14 Thank you for providing me an
15 opportunity to give comment today on our
16 President's proposed initiative. I have two
17 comments for you today. Regarding the new
18 college ratings proposal, students receiving
19 Pell Grants are referenced as a measurement of
20 access; they're not referenced in the outcomes.
21 I would recommend that the Administration
22 incorporate Pell recipients into the graduation

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1 and transfer rate measures to have a better
2 understanding of their performance.

3 The Pell cohort is currently
4 collected within the student financial aid
5 survey. Additional measures would be needed to
6 be added to the graduation rates and graduation
7 rates survey. Measuring the outcomes of this
8 cohort may provide valuable information for the
9 Administration's initiative.

10 Number two, regarding a proposed
11 changed to Pell disbursement for institutions
12 with high dropout rates, I'm not a finance expert
13 but I would expect the majority of Pell awards
14 would be applied towards tuition for most
15 students.

16 How would this change affect an
17 institution's ability to manage its own cash
18 flow and would there be additional costs and
19 accounting burden to the institution or the
20 federal government to make consecutive payments
21 over the course of a semester?

22 Thank you for your time.

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1 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
2 Jada Lewis and Robert Carmouche.
3 Okay. We'll come back to Ms. Lewis. Mr.
4 Carmouche? Go for it.

5 MR. CARMOUCHE: Yes. My name is
6 Robert L. Carmouche. I'm Director of the TRIO
7 Programs at the University of Louisiana at
8 Lafayette. To our special guests, I want to
9 thank you for giving me the opportunity to
10 express my concerns and views regarding the
11 implementation of the college value and
12 affordability and college rating system.

13 I'm a former math and science
14 teacher and high school counselor, and I have
15 worked with the TRIO Programs, which are
16 designed to inform, to improve the retention and
17 graduation rates of low-income and
18 first-generation students for more than 40
19 years.

20 I have discovered that providing
21 students with adequate resources and support
22 services is an injustice to the students who come

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1 from low-income families and first-generation
2 backgrounds without giving them proper
3 assistance in those areas.

4 These students in large come from
5 families that don't understand the rigorous
6 academic work that needs to be done, nor can
7 these families provide their children with the
8 resources to get assistance if they do not
9 understand how rigorous it is to work on a
10 college degree.

11 The TRIO Programs, specifically the
12 Student Support Services programs, have
13 developed academic support services for
14 low-income students that have resulted in
15 graduation rates that did not only measure up to
16 our institutions' overall graduation rate but
17 also has exceeded it.

18 Consequently the Administration
19 must significantly increase the financial
20 resources for these programs, especially
21 programs such as Student Support Services and
22 others, in addition to the recipients of Pell

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1 Grant awards.

2 We know in TRIO that less than 10
3 percent of the students who come from these
4 backgrounds receive these services because
5 these programs are funded to only serve a limited
6 number of these students, not the entire
7 eligible population at a given institution.
8 Yet they are provided with the Pell Grant without
9 the benefit of these proven services.

10 Additionally a significant number
11 of low-income students in Louisiana select to
12 attend a university within close proximity to
13 their geographic area, and this is primarily for
14 reasons of affordability and family ties. The
15 parents are also extremely concerned about their
16 children overburdening themselves with a huge
17 amount of loans to obtain a college degree.

18 After looking at the proposal, this
19 seems like universities in Louisiana, because we
20 have such a high percentage of low-income and
21 first-generation students, might fare worse in
22 this rating system. We all know that students

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1 from this background are less likely to be
2 retained and graduate if they are not given the
3 resources they need to persist, and I don't see
4 anything in the proposal that suggests that this
5 might happen.

6 Universities throughout the state
7 of Louisiana have been receiving a low
8 percentage of state-supported dollars for the
9 past several years. This funding level has
10 prevented institutions from appropriating
11 necessary financial support for resources to
12 provide academic and personal support to
13 low-income students who are most in need.

14 I see this as an extra burden on the
15 students who find themselves in this situation
16 at no fault of their own. And institutions are
17 concerned about their graduation rates, and they
18 may be less likely to enroll these students
19 unless academic support services are provided.
20 I don't see where this proposal attempts to
21 address these concerns. Therefore, I highly
22 recommend that attention be given to these

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1 issues.

2 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
3 Again, we invite you to submit your written
4 remarks to collegefeedback@ed.gov.

5 Joe Gipson. Jada Lewis. Thank
6 you.

7 MS. LEWIS: Good evening. Can you
8 hear me?

9 MS. STUDLEY: Yes. You can -- I
10 think you can tilt it down if -- yes.

11 MS. LEWIS: Jada Lewis, LSU College
12 of Engineering, Assistant Dean for the Office of
13 Diversity Programs. My main concern -- I really
14 don't have too many comments about what needs to
15 be part of the rating system. But with all this
16 work with getting input for the information, my
17 concern is equity of access for the students, the
18 parents to access that information.

19 And so my main concern is that there
20 is equity of access to the information. As we
21 all know, there are huge segments of the
22 population that still don't have access to

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1 internet and usage.

2 And so my recommendation is really,
3 you know, after you get all the recommendations
4 and suggestions from all the different
5 stakeholders is regarding how you're going to
6 partner with some of the public libraries and in
7 secondary education to increase accessibility
8 to especially those underserved,
9 underrepresented populations and as to the
10 funding that could be available to add
11 computers, Wi-Fi to different schools and public
12 facilities.

13 The second thing I would like to
14 address outside of equity of access, some of the
15 characteristics individuals should look for
16 when choosing a college. I think you should
17 include something about majors and the
18 availability of majors. And it's also
19 important to add the accreditation of those
20 programs in there. Because especially
21 engineering, it great to get an engineering
22 degree, but if you get an engineering degree from

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1 a non-accredited university, your degree is
2 pretty much useless.

3 And so I recommend adding that
4 accreditation to those listings of majors.
5 Also including information on student body
6 composition and faculty composition. As we
7 know with regards to diversity with students,
8 it's very important to have that at an
9 institution.

10 Also include information about
11 faculty-student ratios. Especially with the
12 budget cuts in higher education, those ratios
13 are increasing and they do impact student body
14 and outcomes as well. And I also think we should
15 include Student Support Services such as
16 tutoring and other special programs that help
17 students succeed. Thank you.

18 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much,
19 Ms. Lewis. Appreciate you speaking.

20 Jennifer Commodore, Melissa
21 Brocato, and DeWayne Bowie are the next three
22 presenters. Is Jennifer Commodore here?

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1 (No response)

2 Melissa Brocato.

3 MS. BROCATO: Good afternoon.

4 Thank you for providing this opportunity. I
5 want to thank LSU for hosting this event. My
6 name's Melissa Brocato, and I'm the Director of
7 the Center for Academic Success here at LSU.

8 I would like to speak about the
9 tremendous potential that college learning
10 centers have to assist with increasing the value
11 and affordability of higher education. The
12 primary role of learning centers is to increase
13 the student learning and academic success of all
14 students, including students who are at high
15 risk academically.

16 Learning centers are on a majority
17 of college campuses and traditionally provide
18 students services to make the academic
19 transitions from high school to college.
20 Learning centers provide the infrastructure to
21 teach students appropriate college-level
22 learning strategies and provide academic

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1 support such as tutoring and peer-led study
2 discussions. These services are proven to
3 increase student retention, learning, and
4 graduation rates.

5 LSU data resoundingly demonstrates
6 that students who utilize these services have
7 higher GPAs, complete challenging courses in a
8 more timely manner, and are retained at higher
9 rates than students who do not. For example,
10 students at LSU who are academically at risk
11 after their first semester at LSU who attend a
12 two-hour workshop on meta-targeted learning
13 strategies were able to improve their GPA by an
14 average of a half a letter grade and were
15 retained at 20 percent higher rate than other
16 academically at-risk students who did not
17 attend.

18 Additionally, students who
19 participate in academic support services such as
20 tutoring and supplemental instruction perform
21 and are retained at a much higher rate than
22 students in the same majors who do not.

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1 Successful academic performance is one of the
2 biggest factors in student retention and
3 graduation.

4 I hope this program strongly
5 considers current infrastructures that already
6 exist and work and consider expanding these
7 infrastructures to provide adequate services
8 for students. I also hope that college learning
9 centers and other support programs such as TRIO
10 Programs will be viewed as key partners moving
11 forward in helping to increase the affordability
12 and the value of higher education for all
13 students. Thank you.

14 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

15 I just a moment ago announced
16 DeWayne Bowie. Are you here?

17 (No response.)

18 We're a little bit ahead of the time
19 that we gave for some of these folks.

20 Jennifer Commodore, are you here?

21 (No response.)

22 We have two walk-ins, Amanda Major

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1 and Rob Lisles. Are either of you here with us
2 at this point? Excuse me? Oh, you didn't want
3 to speak, you were just saying that you -- okay.
4 That's fine.

5 We will give you a break. I just
6 want to see if there's anybody who's here who is
7 eager to take the time with us. Mr. Bowie was
8 not here. Ronald Mason?

9 (No response.)

10 James Callier? Taylor Foundation.
11 Thank you.

12 MR. CALLIER: Thank you for the
13 opportunity to be here today to make a couple
14 comments. I think the rating system ought to
15 include both disincentives as well as
16 incentives, and the incentives should include
17 things such as time to degree.

18 We should shorten time to degree as
19 much as possible. That would be a savings to the
20 student, the state. May not be a savings to the
21 institution. It's to the institution's
22 advantage to keep the students as long as

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1 possible. So we need to watch that.

2 Minority enrollment. Minority and
3 low-income enrollment should be a factor that
4 should be considered in the mix. Support
5 services for those minority students is a very
6 -- I think it's a moral, intellectual, and legal
7 obligation if those students are admitted to
8 help them to graduate. If not, then that
9 institution should be called out. It should be
10 a positive incentive for such enrollment.

11 Minority enrollment in high-demand
12 programs should be another incentive. Too
13 often they are placed in programs such as general
14 studies and liberal arts that have no real
15 value -- employment value after graduation,
16 especially minority students. For the majority
17 of students, it's not the same; they have a
18 greater opportunity to find employment. But
19 minority students need to be in specific degree
20 programs to be able to find real employment after
21 graduation.

22 I would also suggest that the rating

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1 system not only be for the universe of that
2 institution but that the subsets, subsets for
3 minority students, low-income determine at what
4 rate are they graduating at that institution.
5 For example, I have examined institutions that
6 may have a graduation rate of 60 percent, and
7 when you look at the African-American graduation
8 rate, it's 10 and 15 percent.

9 That's critical. That's something
10 that should be examined, and subsets should be
11 developed to be able to identify these minority
12 groups and then determine how they compare to the
13 general population. If not, institutions could
14 be rewarded for failing a whole section of the
15 student body that needs services and degrees
16 more than the general population.

17 So I would suggest that examination
18 of these features should be critical in any
19 rating system. I strongly support the rating
20 system. I think it is needed. We need
21 accountability in higher ed. We have never had
22 any real accountability in higher ed. The

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1 accrediting bodies have done a poor job in terms
2 of looking at outcomes in higher education. Yet
3 they receive accreditation because that's not a
4 key factor in the accreditation process.

5 The United States Department of
6 Education has to approve the accrediting bodies,
7 and in the approval process that ought to be a
8 critical component in terms of looking at
9 accreditation. Institutions that have a
10 graduation rate as low as the teens are highly
11 accredited, that should be examined, not only
12 for the for-profit schools but also the
13 nonprofit schools. And we take too much for
14 granted when we assume that because
15 accreditation is granted that the institutions
16 are doing their designated jobs in terms of role
17 of the school and admissions, but that's not
18 necessarily the case.

19 I hope that the department would
20 give some very serious consideration that
21 admission of a student is a moral, intellectual,
22 and legal responsibility to help that student

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1 graduate and to provide whatever support
2 services that are necessary.

3 If not, you will continue to have
4 what we have in terms of higher education where
5 not only 58 percent of the students are
6 graduating in the universe but only 10 to 15
7 percent of minority students are graduating.
8 That's a significant difference that needs to be
9 closed; the gap should be closed. Thank you.

10 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

11 With that, our next few witnesses
12 are for times that are a few minutes away. So
13 why don't we take a break of about ten minutes,
14 and we'll you back in here at a quarter of.
15 Thank you.

16 (A brief recess ensued.)

17 MS. STUDLEY: Okay. Let me just
18 recap the state of play here and go back quickly
19 and see who is waiting for the opportunity to
20 participate. Is Jennifer Commodore here?

21 (No response.)

22 MS. STUDLEY: DeWayne Bowie?

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1 (No response.)

2 MS. STUDLEY: Ronald Mason?

3 (No response.)

4 MS. STUDLEY: Okay. In that case,
5 Ms. Barrios, I think you're going to be up next
6 in just a moment. I know, deep breath, but it's
7 fun. And then Taylor Parks and Alex Grashoff.
8 So Barrios, Parks, and Grashoff in that order,
9 and then I'll check whether anyone has arrived.

10 Thank you very much, Ms. Barrios.
11 We're ready whenever you are.

12 Oh, and there's one other. I'm
13 sorry. The way this was written. Is Bernice
14 Johnson here? Yes. Ms. Johnson, I apologize,
15 the lines were listed a little incorrectly. If
16 you would like to go after Ms. Barrios, that
17 would be just fine. Is that okay with you?
18 After her, we'll take you. Thank you.

19 Anytime you're ready. Thank you.

20 MS. BARRIOS: Thank you very much
21 for having me. I take every opportunity I can
22 to advocate for education regardless of the

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1 level. My name is Lee Barrios; I'm a recent
2 retired teacher from St. Tammany. I'm going to
3 speak quite directly and honestly. With all due
4 respect, I believe your initiative titled "A
5 Better Bargain for the Middle Class" is based at
6 the outset on several false premises.

7 First of all, I question that the
8 federal government should be inserting itself so
9 formidably in what should be state-level
10 education policy development. And that is what
11 this initiative's really designed to
12 accomplish. By using the same carrot-and-stick
13 approach by offering federal funding based on
14 performance, this Administration is setting up
15 higher education for the same failed
16 race-to-nowhere mandates that are rapidly
17 moving K-12 public ed down the road to
18 privatization.

19 Now the Administration is
20 effectively using the economic downturn and the
21 offer of rewards for prescribed performance to
22 bribe and coerce our public state colleges and

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1 universities to adopt policies that will in fact
2 limit accessibility for those students and
3 individuals who would most benefit from
4 continuing education and would offer the most
5 benefit to society by continuing their
6 education.

7 Let's talk about pay for
8 performance. I think it's fair to compare our
9 K-12 public schools to our state colleges and
10 universities in the sense that the grand purpose
11 is to promote learning. Universities are after
12 all referred to as institutes of higher
13 learning. But the rhetoric we're hearing now
14 refers to investment in futures, workforce
15 development, best value, education
16 marketplaces, consumers, not students, and
17 competition.

18 But the product of a school or
19 university should yield more than a diploma
20 earned in an artificially determined period of
21 years. Ask any teacher or professor how easily
22 it would be to arrange for that. But of course

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1 it's not going to do anything, give real value
2 to the university, the students, the public who
3 ultimately foots much of the bill for our public
4 universities.

5 The real disaster will be in
6 limiting the possibility for all our high school
7 graduates or adults who find the opportunity
8 later in life to enroll as alternative students,
9 of which I was one. And just as public charter
10 schools have found myriad ways to be selective
11 in their enrollment, illegally I might add, in
12 order to ensure the standardized test scores are
13 high enough to keep them in business, suddenly
14 our colleges and universities will have to raise
15 admission requirements, turn away students who
16 are part-time of necessity, and set absolute
17 requirements for a course selection that leads
18 only to a specific degree.

19 Then there is the idea of threats to
20 students and colleges who accept student aid but
21 don't meet the prescribed goal of a degree. And
22 most baffling to me is the use of the term

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1 "affordable debt." That seems to be an oxymoron
2 and bad business practices. Making it easier
3 for students to go into debt should not be a
4 primary initiative.

5 So what is my solution to the problem
6 of funding education? First of all, this state
7 needs to elect a governor and legislators who
8 understand the value of an educated citizenry
9 and the importance of making education available
10 to anyone who accepts the challenge regardless
11 of their socioeconomic condition or performance
12 goals. Lastly, there are two failing
13 policies that have been foisted on K-12
14 education that USDED is proposing on which to
15 base funding for higher ed. One, consequential
16 accountability, and, two, trying to measure
17 quality in quantitative terms and to apply that
18 measurement to produce quality.

19 Consequential accountability is a
20 new name for an old ineffective practice that has
21 no place in the field of education or even in the
22 business of education. It hasn't worked in

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1 K-12, and it won't work for higher ed if the
2 consequences are punitive rather than
3 constructive.

4 Example: You send your son out to
5 cut the grass and he does a lousy job. You have
6 two options under the theory of consequential
7 accountability: The punitive option sends him
8 to his room where he's restricted from all social
9 interaction for the weekend.

10 As the constructive consequence you
11 take him back outside, show him his
12 deficiencies, teach him now to correct them, and
13 make him cut the grass again. Two goals were
14 achieved. The kid learned something, and the
15 grass is cut to your satisfaction.

16 Withholding money from universities
17 is a punitive or threatening form of
18 consequential accountability, and is a futile
19 attempt to make equality a quantitative term,
20 grad rates, et cetera. The goal of education is
21 denied.

22 It has proven to be a failure to K-12

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1 schools who have been coerced under NCLB and now
2 Race To The Top to institute high-stakes
3 standardized tests. But those tests cannot
4 measure learning; they can only measure the
5 number of correct answers on a test. A letter
6 grade is assigned and no improvement has been
7 made educationally. The student, the teacher,
8 and the school are simply punished under the
9 specter of consequential accountability.

10 I encourage USDED and Congress to
11 consult with practicing educators expert in the
12 field of education psychology, and additionally
13 to look from a business perspective at the world
14 of experts in both fields like Daniel Pink.
15 Let's do no harm in a misguided attempt to
16 measure that which cannot be measured, learning,
17 quantitatively and in an attempt to parse out
18 limited ed dollars to a select clientele. Thank
19 you.

20 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.

21 Ms. Johnson.

22 MS. JOHNSON: Good afternoon.

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1 Thank you for the opportunity to speak to the
2 score card for higher education.

3 I am Bernice Duffy Johnson; I am the
4 Chief Academic Officer for North Carolina
5 Central University in Durham, North Carolina.
6 North Carolina Central University is a
7 historically black institution, 110 years old,
8 and it does an excellent job of educating its
9 students.

10 The proposal to establish a rating
11 system that will allow students to instantly
12 compare schools to discover the best
13 affordability for their educational goals is one
14 that will allow students to maximize the aid they
15 receive. The President has asked for a standard
16 to be set that would reward those institutions
17 that maximize access and affordability for the
18 middle income group and those trying to enter
19 middle income.

20 North Carolina Central University
21 is committed to expending every dollar awarded
22 to the fullest at building a foundation that

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1 enables our students to enroll and graduate in
2 four years. In August of this year Business
3 Insider magazine ranked North Carolina Central
4 as number 15 in the country as one of the most
5 affordable and accessible institutions for
6 low-income families in the University of North
7 Carolina system and one of the most affordable
8 institutions in its peer group in the United
9 States.

10 The score card for higher education
11 can spark a healthy competition among
12 institutions of higher education in comfortable
13 Carnegie classifications and peer rating
14 groupings. The proposal to incentivize
15 colleges and universities for effectively and
16 efficiently doing what colleges and
17 universities are established to do seems
18 appropriate and yet, there are some concerns.

19 Consideration must be given to
20 various characteristics of institutions and
21 populations they serve. Consideration also
22 must be given to the sources and amounts of

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1 funding allocated to these institutions as what
2 the students and families must pay.

3 Consideration should also be given
4 to look at the students that are enrolled in
5 populations of institutions that would have an
6 average SAT of 800 and an average GPA of 2.7 and
7 those whose average SAT are maybe 1500 and a GPA
8 of 3.3. There are those colleges and
9 universities who enroll students at the low end
10 of the GPA and SAT and ACT, yet graduate those
11 students to be very competitive with those who
12 enroll students at the other end of those
13 ratings.

14 Colleges and universities already
15 go through high levels of assessment through
16 regional and national accreditations for the
17 entire institution and through a myriad of
18 specialized accreditations.

19 A college education is one of the
20 greatest assets and investments of any state and
21 of our nation. And it is important that our
22 government takes an interest in the quality of

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1 education in our institutions, and not only take
2 an interest but put forth some monies to assist
3 which assures the quality of that education,
4 because a college education does more than
5 prepare an individual for a career, work, and the
6 future. It prepares one for life itself.

7 The constitution of the State of
8 North Carolina says that education for the
9 citizens of the state should be as close to free
10 as possible, yet we have had several budget cuts
11 for state institutions that also has caused us
12 to increase the tuition and fees for students who
13 attend our institutions.

14 Our education again has been under
15 a microscope for many years, and HBCUs
16 particularly in regards to the quality of
17 education that we provide to our students. Yet
18 in spite of the fact that we may get students who
19 come to us underprepared, we graduate students
20 who are highly competitive. We have
21 a few proposals for incentivizing and for the
22 completion of the four-year degree. The first

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1 is that when we look at the Pell eligibility and
2 the Pell allocations, that at our institution of
3 over 8,000 students 74 percent of them are
4 Pell-eligible, if we would look at that and
5 incentivize the Pell Grants for those students
6 who complete 30 to 32 credit hours per year, to
7 add to that Pell Grant a \$1,000 award for those
8 students each year that they complete their 30
9 to 32 credit hours.

10 Also looking at what we could use to
11 decrease the number of years or the length of
12 time for completion by looking at a
13 competency-based rather than course-based
14 degree program completion.

15 We are in the age of accountability
16 and assessment. And we're not going to prevent
17 this from happening even in higher education.
18 With our rating standards for the state this
19 year, our university had to turn away 300
20 students that we could have enrolled last year.
21 About the third week of the semester we had 223
22 students who were not able to continue their

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1 enrollment because of finances. These students
2 had over 3.0 GPAs, just did not have the funds
3 to continue.

4 It is imperative that our nation
5 critically looks at ways in which we can make
6 higher education more affordable for all of our
7 citizens and, as the State of North Carolina
8 constitution indicates, as close to free as
9 possible.

10 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
11 Can I just ask you to be sure on your way out that
12 we have your title at North Carolina Central as
13 well as your name? Thank you very much.

14 I now have Taylor Parks, Alex
15 Grashoff, and Brian Longstreet in that order.
16 Were you --

17 MS. PARKS: I'm Taylor Parks.

18 MS. STUDLEY: Okay, excellent. So
19 come forward. I'm just checking whether there
20 are other people who were waiting.

21 DeWayne Bowie or Ronald Mason?

22 (No response.)

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1 MS. STUDLEY: Names are becoming
2 familiar to all of us, right?

3 Taylor, I'll let you go ahead in just
4 one second. Alex and then Brian Longstreet will
5 be next. Thank you. Appreciate it.

6 MS. PARKS: Good afternoon,
7 everyone. My name is Taylor Parks, and I'm a
8 senior here at Louisiana State University as
9 well as this year I have the honor of serving as
10 the student body vice-president for Louisiana
11 State University.

12 So today I just wanted to speak to
13 you briefly kind of about a student perspective
14 on the proposals that are being made and how it
15 would affect our university as a whole as well
16 as our students.

17 I know, speaking on behalf of the
18 student body, that there's essentially nothing
19 that's more important than an affordable
20 education. And I think that for LSU that's
21 something that we do extremely well for our
22 students, which is the most important. I mean

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1 I think that that's something that needs to be
2 recognized and reflected in rankings in the
3 United States.

4 For myself, for example, I'm from
5 New Roads, Louisiana, so I'm an in-state
6 student. Many of the students who attend LSU
7 are also in-state students. I've think that
8 we've had a lot of really excellent
9 opportunities that have assisted us in
10 maintaining and achieving an affordable
11 education.

12 Particularly the TOPS program is
13 something that's in effect for students in
14 Louisiana. For those of you who aren't
15 familiar, it's the Taylor Opportunity Program
16 for Students. It serves as a way of funding
17 students based upon their SAT or ACT scores
18 within the state in terms of higher education.

19 I think that this is something
20 that's been extremely beneficial for a lot of
21 in-state students at LSU just because it
22 provides the opportunity to receive an education

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1 that otherwise wouldn't be made available based
2 upon financial need. I know for myself
3 particularly I probably wouldn't have been able
4 to attend an institution were it not for the
5 opportunities that are awarded to me through the
6 TOPS program. So I think that's something that
7 is extremely beneficial for our students.

8 I think that an accessible education
9 is something that we really need to look at when
10 evaluating rankings for universities. I think
11 that it's very important for us to say is this
12 something that students are easily able to
13 achieve, is it something that students have
14 access to in general. I think that's extremely
15 important.

16 And I know LSU does a fantastic job
17 not only in providing students with that but also
18 in providing them with keys to success during
19 their time here at the university. I know
20 there's various programs that we have at the
21 university that are all geared toward student
22 success and in making sure that the students are

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1 able to graduate with an excellent education,
2 and to graduate with a job. And that's
3 incredibly important I know for me and for many
4 of my peers at the university as well.

5 So I think that when evaluating
6 these rankings and what's best in terms of how
7 we choose to go about ranking these
8 universities, you really need to look at do the
9 universities provide students with the tools
10 that are necessary for success, do they provide
11 education that is easy for students to obtain,
12 and is it something that's going to lead to a
13 successful career in the future, whether that be
14 through monetary earnings or it being just
15 through the ability to contribute the field in
16 which they're studying, I think that's
17 incredibly important for us to look.

18 And so I believe that with the
19 proposals that are made I think that that does
20 reflect well on the university in saying that LSU
21 is providing students doing the best job that
22 they can to provide students with an education

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1 that's going to lead them to a successful career,
2 and also to have the knowledge base that they
3 need to be successful in the world at large. And
4 so that's just something that I definitely feel
5 we should look at and continue to evaluate when
6 including these rankings.

7 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you very much.
8 We appreciate that. Thank you.

9 Alex Grashoff, also a LSU student
10 government leader.

11 MR. GRASHOFF: Hi, how are you all.
12 Thanks for the opportunity to speak today. My
13 name is Alex Grashoff. I am a senior in
14 mechanical engineering here at LSU. I'm also
15 serving in student government, as just
16 mentioned, I'm the speaker of the senate. And
17 I'd like to share with you why I am absolutely
18 in favor of a rating system for colleges produced
19 by some kind of affordability or some other
20 monetary reasons.

21 When I was graduating high school I
22 was looking at several institutions across the

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1 country, NC State, Notre Dame, many that had
2 great programs, great records. I looked at
3 Princeton Review or anything that was produced
4 that way, they were very highly ranked. And
5 talking to my parents, my family, a lot of
6 engineers in my family, a lot of, you know,
7 people that worked in industry, when I asked what
8 school should I go to it was LSU absolutely.

9 The money that you pay to go here,
10 I'll be graduating this year in May 2014 with no
11 debt. The programs that are offered through
12 TOPS, as previously mentioned, as well as any
13 kind of aid that I've gotten was fantastic. But
14 one thing that I'm not sure has been mentioned
15 yet is the opportunities of companies to come in
16 to the institution and recruit.

17 I'm mechanical engineering, so
18 engineering is a pretty big deal in the South,
19 oil and gas, and it's not just oil and gas, but
20 that whole industry drives a lot of the
21 opportunities. And I've been able -- fortunate
22 enough through Career Services here to have an

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1 internship every summer.

2 And with those internships I've been
3 able to save money and pay for my fifth year at
4 LSU without having to take out any loans or
5 anything like that because of the scholarships
6 and TOPS I received my first four years and then
7 the fifth year I was able to save money through
8 internships and career opportunities, and I'll
9 be graduating with a job right out of college.

10 So one thing that I think is very
11 important is that this ranking system is for
12 students going into college, and when you're 16
13 to 18 years old, trying to read what's important,
14 Princeton Review or anything like that, you
15 don't want to look at it for the product you're
16 going to get at the end. And the product that
17 LSU gives you is an opportunity for employment
18 and a career entering the workforce.

19 And to me that's the most important
20 thing that I was looking for. And if I would
21 have gone to other institutions I would have been
22 paying two times, three times the amount that I'm

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1 paying here for less opportunity to get a job.
2 I would have been disappointed in what I was
3 investing my money in. And now when I have zero
4 debt and getting the product that I was looking
5 for in the beginning, I'm very happy with what
6 I've got. And I feel like if there was a
7 standardized ranking system that informed 16- to
8 18-year-old students looking for higher
9 education of what kinds of -- what product
10 they're going to get when they graduate, that
11 would be extremely beneficial for not just the
12 Louisiana residents but also for United States
13 residents. Thank you.

14 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you.

15 Brian Longstreet is the next speaker
16 listed. If anyone else is interested in
17 participating in speaking, we have reached the
18 end of -- we've given everybody at least one
19 chance to speak. I'll go back through the names
20 who we have on the list who haven't spoken, but
21 we would welcome you and, as they say, you know,
22 the line will be short, no waiting, and this will

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1 be your opportunity.

2 Mr. Longstreet.

3 BRIAN LONGSTREET: Thank you. And
4 I'm going to try to make this quick, because I
5 know everybody's probably looking at their
6 clocks, and especially since I'm the last person
7 I'm sure everybody's ready to go.

8 MS. STUDLEY: We'll be here all day
9 though. We don't leave any earlier, so relax.

10 MR. LONGSTREET: I wanted to make
11 sure that I addressed that during my time up
12 here. First, I think we need to revisit or
13 reevaluate how we look at the graduation rate of
14 colleges. Also I think we need to do a better
15 job through the clearing house, and we need to
16 better assess the academic journey rather than
17 the end point of that journey, which is of course
18 their diploma.

19 Tell you a little bit more about
20 myself. I am an 11-year graduate. It took me
21 11 years to finish my bachelor's degree. That
22 was no fault of all four colleges that I attended

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1 before I got to that point. But I was very
2 focused on my career and led a very successful
3 career as a result of that and ended up working
4 for a for-profit college and did very well there,
5 worked for a lot of adult students that were also
6 trying to seek their education.

7 And a lot of the statements that came
8 up a lot during my time there was the phrase that
9 life happens. People get divorced, people get
10 married, people have children, people die,
11 people change jobs and careers and get laid off.
12 All these things happen and they have absolutely
13 nothing to do with the college themselves.

14 As I was working with adult
15 students, to give you an example, I worked with
16 one woman, she would find someone she fell in
17 love with, she would drop out of school to plan
18 a wedding, because that's a very intensive
19 experience. She would then once again go on the
20 honeymoon, enjoy the glow of being a newlywed,
21 and then would want to start a family. And after
22 that they would have been out of school anywhere

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1 from one to three years.

2 Now, under graduation rates, we
3 measure graduation rates in six-year intervals.
4 If you don't graduate from a school within in six
5 years, to my knowledge, you were not counted as
6 a graduate for that college. Now, as you would
7 more focus again -- I'm focusing more on adult
8 learners, more of your 25-and-up crowd, you have
9 more of those issues happen, because as we get
10 older we have more of those issues.

11 Now, those negatively impact the
12 ratings and performance of a school, at no fault
13 of the college. And I'm a perfect example of
14 that. However, you may have students here that
15 attend a great college like LSU and go through
16 a great business program and want to become an
17 entrepreneur. They graduate and then have no
18 income as they starve and try to create the
19 business over the next few years to turn a
20 profit. They negatively impact the employment
21 rate of how much that graduate is now earning.

22 So I think we need to look at that.

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1 I think those are issues that negatively impact
2 the school's performance through absolutely no
3 fault of the college or no fault of the college.

4 The other thing is that students
5 often transfer between colleges. That's
6 happening more and more as students go through
7 life and make mistakes and make successes. And
8 the clearing house doesn't really do a good job
9 of following students as they transfer from
10 college to college to appropriately award credit
11 to the colleges that have educated that student
12 along the way.

13 So a lot of colleges incur extra cost
14 and time by creating a reverse articulation of
15 units between other institutions so that they
16 can try to give credit between that student
17 transferring from one institution to another.
18 And so I think we can do a better job of that
19 through the clearing house before we institute
20 more regulations that can potentially create
21 more opportunities for missed opportunities.

22 The other thing is that the

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1 graduation, although it's a wonderful
2 experience, is just really a piece of paper and
3 a culmination of an academic journey. The
4 learning doesn't magically happen when that
5 student gets a piece of paper; it happened over
6 the two to four years or however long that
7 student was in school. And if we don't assess
8 that student's learning as it's happening, I
9 think we will poorly represent the actual value
10 of the educational experience that that person's
11 getting. It will not do the school justice for
12 the great institution that they truly are.

13 The only model that I've seen that's
14 done that so far that tends to do that is the
15 competency-based model, which someone mentioned
16 earlier. I know it's really experimental but I
17 think that's moving in the right direction. And
18 corporate America has been doing that for
19 several years now.

20 So those are my points. I think we
21 need to extend the graduation rate beyond six
22 years. I think we need to delve into the

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1 clearing house to better track students as they
2 transfer between institutions and better
3 measure learning as it's happening and not just
4 when they graduate. Thank you for your time.

5 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you.

6 Noah Ballard has expressed an
7 interest to present. Thank you.

8 MR. BALLARD: Thank you for giving
9 me the chance to speak. I apologize for my
10 casual dress; I've been in class since 7:30 this
11 morning and I'm coming directly from there.

12 I just wanted to express that coming
13 from a working class family college
14 affordability was incredibly important in
15 making my decision. I'm actually from Atlanta,
16 so I'm attending LSU as an out-of-state student.
17 But I would like to commend LSU for its
18 commitment to affordability.

19 I'm actually coming to LSU on a
20 special program that will allow me to have
21 in-state tuition, which comparable to other
22 southeastern schools, is very affordable. And

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1 for someone who is paying their own way through
2 college, that was incredibly attractive. And
3 combining that with the excellent education I
4 can receive here at LSU, I'm absolutely ecstatic
5 to be experiencing this education here.

6 As the previous speaker mentioned,
7 transfer rates are incredibly important in
8 monitoring the college value. I think too much
9 emphasis is put on graduation rates, because if
10 students are not -- if they don't see the value
11 in continuing their investment in college, if
12 they don't see that return at the end of the
13 tunnel, they're not going to continue paying
14 those exorbitant rates at a university for that
15 education. They're going to go elsewhere,
16 they're going to enter the workforce without
17 that degree.

18 So in formulating a model like the
19 President has in his plans for tying university
20 funding to college value ratings, I think
21 transfer rate and student retention should have
22 just as much weight as graduation rate, and that

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1 student retention from first to second year,
2 from second to third, and then third to fourth,
3 and seeing if those students continue to put
4 forth that effort and put forth that sort of
5 investment for their college education.

6 That's all I have to say. Thank
7 you.

8 MS. STUDLEY: I appreciate your
9 opening comment about your informality. We're
10 glad that you participated anyway. But that's
11 very professional of you to say that.

12 Is there anyone else who would like
13 the opportunity to speak? As I said, having
14 posted that we would be here through five
15 o'clock, we will be in case anybody who's not
16 here right now comes along.

17 Would you please come up and let us
18 know your name and affiliation, if any.

19 MR. GORMAN: My name is Patrick
20 Gorman. I'm Financial Aid Director at
21 Louisiana State University Health Sciences
22 Center in New Orleans. I too am a little

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1 underdressed, but I appreciate the opportunity
2 to visit with you and share some experiences from
3 the trenches. As far as I know, I'm the only
4 financial aid administrator to come up to the
5 mike today.

6 But I wanted to tell you a little bit
7 about our school and then provide some requests
8 or suggestions. We're serving approximately
9 2800 students this fall, and over the course of
10 the year probably about 3,000. Probably about
11 2200 students are financial aid recipients.

12 Last year we administered about \$60
13 million in student financial aid, which seems
14 like a lot given our student population, but it
15 does include medical and dental programs where
16 students are borrowing heavily. Our student
17 loan borrowing is -- through the Federal Direct
18 Program last year was approximately \$49 million.

19 As far as affordability goes, I
20 think we're doing well on that score. Our
21 tuition and fees for the current academic year
22 range from approximately \$5,000 per year for our

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1 undergraduate nursing and dental hygiene
2 students to about \$24,000 a year for our medical
3 students. Sounds like a lot of money, but
4 actually if you compare medical school tuition
5 and fees across the country, you'll see that it's
6 low both for the country and for the southern
7 regional average.

8 One of the things that I would like
9 to suggest to you though is that if you look at
10 cost and look at percentage increases in
11 tuition, I hope that you will keep them in
12 context.

13 You may see some significant
14 percentage increases, but if you look at the
15 tuition and fees in comparison to national and
16 regional averages you'll find that some of the
17 schools with the higher percentage increases may
18 still be well below those averages and providing
19 an excellent value in that sense to their
20 students.

21 Our school is in a sense immune or
22 exempt from some of the current metrics being

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1 used for college comparison at the federal level
2 because we have no freshmen. About 30 percent
3 of our students are undergraduates, but they all
4 take, generally speaking, at least a year to two
5 years of prerequisite course work before
6 beginning, before gaining access or admission to
7 our program.

8 And I request that in developing
9 your metrics that you do take into account the
10 excellent job that many schools like ours are
11 doing for our students, and find a way to include
12 evaluation of our schools that isn't going to be
13 dependent at looking at only a first-time
14 full-time freshman.

15 Another request I have is that if
16 this develops to the point where you are going
17 to be reallocating resources, please don't
18 cannibalize financial aid for graduate
19 professional students anymore.

20 For years we in financial aid
21 administration for graduate and health
22 profession students have looked at the

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1 subsidized federal Stafford, federal direct
2 Stafford loan, which has stayed at \$8500 for so
3 many years, and we thought, gosh, I wish they
4 would raise that subsidized loan rate to help our
5 students a little bit with their significant
6 debt burdens.

7 And unfortunately the opposite
8 occurred, and the subsidy for graduate level
9 loans, federal direct loans was completely
10 removed in service to I suppose the national debt
11 and being able to fund other important
12 priorities.

13 I can understand there is a primary
14 priority on undergraduate education and on
15 providing access to undergraduate education.
16 But we do still need doctors, we need medical
17 doctors, dentists, physical therapists, and all
18 the other health professions that are taught at
19 the graduate level now in addition to many other
20 graduate level programs.

21 So graduate level education
22 shouldn't just be looked at as a icing on the cake

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1 or something that's totally optional. Because
2 many of the jobs and careers in our country today
3 require graduate level education.

4 And again thank you for the
5 opportunity, and I appreciate it.

6 MS. STUDLEY: Thank you. Will I
7 see you at the FSA training in Las Vegas?

8 MR. GORMAN: Actually, my associates
9 -

10 MS. STUDLEY: There's a big
11 financial aid meeting coming up just after
12 Thanksgiving.

13 Is there anyone else who would like
14 to make a presentation or comment at this point?

15 (No response.)

16 MS. STUDLEY: With that then, we'll
17 take a break. As I said, we'll remain through
18 till five o'clock, because once we've posted it
19 publicly, we want to be able to hear from anybody
20 who relies on that and may stop by. But thank
21 you very much for coming, and thank you for
22 participating, if you did, and for thinking

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1 about these issues as they go forward.

2 We will have additional loops, and
3 I hope that you will watch what we offer up for
4 your further comment, and we may call on some of
5 you to participate in further conversations as
6 we aim to achieve the ultimate goal that I think
7 everyone who has spoken has expressed,
8 supported, and that is of access to higher
9 education and completion of quality programs
10 that give people opportunities to go beyond and
11 fulfill their life ambitions and sustain their
12 families.

13 So it is a pleasure to meet in a sense
14 all of you who did participate here today. Just
15 one more time, we'd love to have any of your
16 prepared testimony or a version that you create
17 after that to collegefeedback@ed.gov so that we
18 can share it in your own words with others who
19 are involved in this process. That's
20 collegefeedback@ed.gov. I'm so used to living
21 in an edu world that it comes trippingly off my
22 tongue.

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1 Thank you again, and thank you for
2 the very kind hospitality here in Baton Rouge.
3 You've all been wonderful, and it's great to be
4 here. Thank you.

5 (Whereupon, at 3:35 p.m., the forum
6 was concluded.)

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