

99

Macias, Wendy

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, June 17, 2009 12:53 PM
To: negreg09
Subject: Student Loan Forgiveness

I am [REDACTED] Doctor, a graduate of Pacific College of Oriental Medicine in Chicago, IL having completed my 4 years to attain a Masters of Science in Oriental Medicine.

While there are many institutions who scramble to collect money, this is on behalf of students, especially those who have gone into medicine and service areas. The amount of debt we are saddled with is incredible. In an effort to stimulate the economy in an 'out of the box' approach, I am proposing a loan forgiveness program, especially geared towards those of us in health and service related fields. The average debt of someone graduating from medical programs is \$125,819, with 95% of those in school borrowing, and professional degrees around \$93,134 (Taken from <http://www.finaid.org/loans/>). This sort of staggering debt ought to be included in a loan forgiveness program under the economic bail-out for these reasons.

1-We who have put ourselves through school for the past 4-8 years are fiscally responsible, and have worked really hard to get where we are at. We are people who could viably contribute to the economy in an educated responsible fashion. We are educated not only in our respective fields, but generally find it important to stay up to date on world affairs. We are in this field with a strong dedication to make the world and our patients a better place. Because we are educated, we have the ability to invest wisely, and start new businesses under new models, rather than working to pay back all loans, and not having money to invest. (I would love to be rewarded for making poor financial decisions (as seems the case with some of the institutions being rewarded), however I feel like giving people money who lost it in the stock market is like giving people money back for the lottery tickets they bought. They were already gambling.) Those of us in school have made an investment in not only our future, but the future of the United States.

2-Granting forgiveness on student loans in the medical fields would allow us to provide an increase in health care options: an increase in preventative medicine, overall care. Part of the loan forgiveness program would require those want loan forgiveness to provide treatment to middle and low income communities and individuals. High debts make it difficult to provide treatment at reasonable prices, because we do not have the liberty to do so.

The system I am proposing would include:

1. medicine to serve the workers, veterans, farmers, etc
2. preventive medicine as well as therapeutic medicine
3. Traditional Medicine ex: Traditional Chinese Medicine, ayurvedic, etc
4. Health work should be combined with other movements

Prevention is a cost effective public health strategy. Having affordable alternative health care that is available to everyone will single handedly improve the quality of life, and keep people in good health for longer. People stay healthy for longer periods of time, heal more rapidly, and are happier when they receive therapy and healing on a regular basis. Alternative care is not currently included in Perkins loans forgiveness or other loan forgiveness programs.

Giving people an option of preventative care builds stronger communities by building stronger interpersonal relationships.

3-Forgiving student loans would promote families and family values. Now this may seem like a stretch, but would anyone who had good financial sense want to start a family \$100,000 in debt? Probably not. So the people who are most educated, who have really worked hard to not only get where they are but to help people, and then saddled with an enormous debt that makes children seem like a poor idea. Families are most successfully started by couples who have the time and energy to work both their respective careers and have time for their family. Enormous debt creates a high stress family situation where setting common goals and sharing responsibility on finances can become damaging to both parties.

Along with a loan forgiveness program I have mentioned Alternative Health Clinics, and their benefits (which Americans could begin benefiting from if some of our debt was forgiven). "According to Bloomberg, companies like WellPoint and Magellan Health Services believe that expensive and unnecessary CT and MRI scans cost them roughly \$30 billion a year." (David P Hamilton, Overtreatment in Action: <http://industry.bnet.com/healthcare/1000138/overtreatment-in-action-30-billion-wasted-on-unnecessary-mri-ct-scans/>). Having programs available that can promote wellness are key to developing a healthy country. It just kind of flows off the lips, doesn't it? This would not be a program that is not focused on sickness but on health.

The key to attaining a healthy country is by having a system not focused only on sickness, but on health and healthy choices. Just as you have emphasized the role of each individuals contribution to volunteer, take care of the community, etc; this should be applied to health. Promoting self care will be part of the shift of the mindset of the public.

The forgiveness program would be put into place for people who earn less than 60,000 year in the service industry. That number is reached by assuming that they are independent contractors and would own approximately 18,000 in taxes, leaving them with 40,000 a year to live off of, and the bill for student loans at \$110,000 is around \$1,000, leaving \$28,000 a year to live off of. Assume around \$1,000 a month in basic rent and living expense, leaving \$16,000 a year. Basically you will not have an amazing apartment, but you would be able to eat.

4-The number of uninsured is rising. In 2007 it was estimated that 18% of Americans, or 46 million people were not insured. This could be a viable solution to the health care crisis.

I have many other good ideas. And would love to share them.

Thank-you for your time, and look forward to hearing from you.

--
Only love interests me, and I am only in contact with things that revolve around love. -

the only way of knowing a person is to love them without hope.

I honestly think it is better to be a failure at something you love than to be a success at something you hate.