Reform Student Loan Repayment
HR 1716

Please cosponsor the Earnings Contingent Education Loans (ExCEL) Act (HR 1716) in the House, and introduce and support companion legislation to HR 1716 in the Senate.

Student debt is considered by many stakeholders to be the next great threat to the American financial system. The average US student loan debt and delinquency rates have increased significantly over the last decade. Analysts suggest that the increased delinquency rate is due to the fact that students’ post-school salaries are no match for the level of their student loan payments.

Individuals who enter fields that require postgraduate education and training face even greater financial burdens. Oral and maxillofacial surgeons (OMSs), for example, must earn both undergraduate and dental degrees, as well as complete a minimum four-year hospital-based residency with limited pay. Many OMSs then go on to earn a medical degree or complete a fellowship training program. By the time OMSs enter the workforce, many have accumulated more than $250,000 in student debt.

The responsibility of immediate and substantial student loan payments serves as one of the main deterrents to young OMSs pursuing a career in academics or research; leaving the specialty at risk of too few faculty to train future OMSs and a lack of researchers to discover and develop new treatment modalities. It also encourages young OMSs to practice in metropolitan areas where there is greater income potential, leaving rural areas at greater risk of being underserved. These provider shortages have the very real and far-ranging potential of preventing patient access to quality care.

The AAOMS believes that legislation such as the ExCEL Act is needed to simplify and improve the student loan borrowing process, protect against financial ruin and protect taxpayer dollars. Accordingly, the ExCEL Act would: 1) Combine several federal student loan options into a single, simple income-contingent student loan that would allow borrowers to pay a percentage of their income – above an allowance for living expenses – until the loan is repaid; 2) Streamline the repayment process by having employers withhold an additional percentage from a borrower’s paycheck along with federal and state taxes; and; 3) Automatically and temporarily stop payments if a borrower loses his/her job.

Key Points:
- HR 1716 sponsored by Rep. Tom Petri (R-WI); 5 cosponsors
- No Senate companion legislation

Supported By:
- Academy of General Dentistry
- American Student Dental Association

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## Student Loan Repayment Reform

**HR 1716 - ExCEL Act**

**Sponsor:** Rep. Petri, Tom [R-WI] (introduced 4/24/2013)  
**Cosponsors (5) as of 3/24/2014**

**COSPONSORS(5), ALPHABETICAL**

- Rep. Kind, Ron [D-WI-3]
- Rep. Polis, Jared [D-CO-2]
- Rep. Vargas, Juan [D-CA-51]