



Minnesota's 4th District E-Report!

Congresswoman Betty McCollum

"Serving Minnesota's Families"



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Hot News!

McCollum Introduces Affordable Tuition Bill

This week, Rep. Betty McCollum and Rep. John Tierney (D-MA) introduced the *College Affordability and Accountability Act* (HR 3519) to control the rising cost of tuition. This legislation offers incentives to students and schools, while demanding accountability from the state and federal governments.

"The spike in tuition costs are making the dream of pursuing higher education out of reach for too many people," said McCollum.

"As the job market becomes increasingly competitive, we must do more to ensure Americans have access to affordable higher education. This bill provides this access by building a partnership between students, schools and the state and federal governments to meet this basic need," McCollum said.

Tuition at the University of MN has jumped 36% since 2000. Nationwide, students at 2- and 4- year public institutions are seeing double-digit percentage increases. The McCollum/Tierney bill reinvigorates the federal-state-school partnership for affordable higher education by:

- **Increasing State Commitment to Affordable Education:** States must maintain their own level of college funding -- ensuring they fulfill their end of the bargain to make a quality college education affordable to all students
- **Providing Incentives to Control Rising Tuition:** The Act would provide additional mandatory Pell Grant funds, or "Pell Plus Grants," to schools that keep their annual net tuition increases at a rate equal to, or below, the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI).
- **Empowering Consumers:** The Act would establish a national online college price calculator, to allow students and parents to accurately estimate the required cost of tuition prices, room and board to attend a particular college.
- **Curbing College Costs:** All colleges and universities would work to implement and report on cost containment strategies designed to help keep tuition prices low.

Rep. McCollum's 4th district includes 19 higher education institutions, representing a broad range of private and public, 2- and 4-year and professional development schools.



Rep. McCollum spoke with a reporter about the Republican bill to overhaul Medicare that awaits a House vote. "This legislation leaves most seniors behind. It does nothing to control drug prices, increases premiums and privatizes Medicare. Seniors have relied on Medicare for nearly 40 years, and they deserve a prescription drug plan under Medicare that they can rely on," McCollum stated.

McCollum-Sponsored Torture Victim Relief Bill Passes House

A measure introduced by Rep. Betty McCollum and Chris Smith (R-NJ) to increase support for victims of torture unanimously passed the House of Representatives this week. The Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act (HR 1813) doubles the current support for our nation's treatment centers through 2006 and creates an international partnership by increasing funding for foreign treatment centers and strengthening our commitment to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture.

During her speech on the House floor, McCollum highlighted the groundbreaking work of the Minnesota-based Center for Victims of Torture (CVT). CVT is a world-renowned center for the treatment and healing of torture victims.

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