



Congressman Tim Bishop

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BISHOP OFFERS PLAN TO MAKE COLLEGE MORE AFFORDABLE

Patchogue—Building on his lifelong commitment to higher education, Congressman Tim Bishop (D-Southampton) today discussed steps he will take in Congress to make college more affordable for students and their families. Bishop, a former Provost of Southampton College has been alarmed at funding cuts in Washington and Albany that make college more expensive. He outlined his plans in remarks to students at St. Joseph's College in Patchogue.

“With our economy in trouble, now more than ever we need to expand opportunity and access to higher education,” Bishop said. “And yet in Washington and Albany, this funding is being decimated. I have spent the last 30 years as an advocate for Long Island’s students and their families, and I will fight even harder in Congress.”

Bishop’s plan to make college more affordable includes:

- Increasing Pell Grant funding so the grants keep pace with the rising cost of college tuition.
- Increase tax credits like HOPE scholarships and student loan interest deductions to help working families meet the rising costs of college tuition.
- Immediate fiscal relief so states like New York can balance their budgets and do not have to slash education funding.

In the last year numbers are available for-- the 1999-2000 academic year-- 64 percent of college students graduated with student loan debt. And in just the past eight years, student debt has doubled to \$16,928. Currently, 39 percent of students have ‘unmanagable debt’ which means that their debt payments are more than eight percent of their monthly income.

“It saddens me to look at our students and think about the kind of financial burden we’re putting on them and their families, just for trying to get ahead,” Bishop said. “I look forward to continuing my fight to make college more affordable in Congress, and I pledge to be a voice for our students and our families.”

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