



THAIMUN

United States Congressional Committee

The Question of the Texas Border Dispute

The Question of Term Limits for Members of Congress

The Question of Student Loan Forgiveness



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introductory Letters:	3
Introduction to the US Congress:	4
Topic 1: The question of Texas border dispute:	5
Topic Introduction:.....	5
KEY TERMS:.....	5
Related Legislation:.....	5
Party Stances:.....	5
Appendix.....	5
Works Cited.....	6
Topic 2: The question of term limits for members of Congress:	7
Topic Introduction:.....	7
KEY TERMS:.....	7
Related Legislation:.....	7
Party Stances:.....	7
Appendix.....	7
Works Cited.....	9
Topic 3: The question of student loan forgiveness:	10
Topic Introduction:.....	10
KEY TERMS:.....	11
Related Legislation:.....	11
Party Stances:.....	11
Appendix.....	11
Works Cited.....	12

Introductory Letters:

Suniti Sudkungwan

Welcome to the United States Congress of THAIMUN XI! My name is Suniti Sudkungwan or Pong (he/him), a junior from Triam Udom Suksa who will be serving as your front room chair in USCC as Speaker of the House Mike Johnson (R-LA). I have participated in a total of 15 conferences so far, delegating in 8 and chairing in 7. Having had the best MUN experience in last year's USCC, I intend to guarantee the exact same experiences for everyone. USCC is one of the most interesting committees out there in the MUN circuit as you will be representing

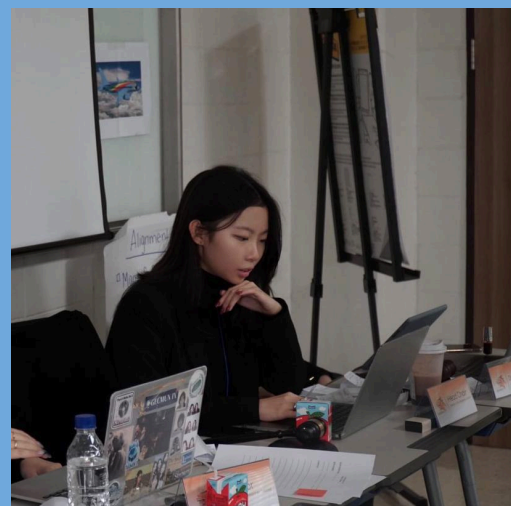


members of Congress in the legislative body of the United States rather than delegates of certain countries. This means that you will have the unique opportunity to explore the particularities of US politics and tackle some of the most divisive issues that threaten even the founding principles of the United States.

If you have any inquiries regarding the committee, the ROP or chair report, please do not hesitate to contact me via email pongppxxk@gmail.com or on my Instagram [@pongpppx](https://www.instagram.com/pongpppx). Even if you just want to talk, I am always (mostly) free! I am looking forward to seeing everyone!

Diane Seyeon Lee

Hello USCC delegates! My name is Diane Seyeon Lee, who will be serving you as a front room chair. USCC and ThaiMUN have always had a special place in my heart since last year (my first ThaiMUN!) and I am overjoyed to participate again, co-chairing with two of my fellow ex-democrat delegates (now chairs). As a current Sophomore from Branksome Hall Asia, I started MUNing since 7th grade, marking this ThaiMUN as my 20th MUN conference. As you can probably tell from the number of conferences I've participated in, I am simply addicted to MUN (or at least that's what my friends say. My other 'addictions'



outside of MUN include listening to music, playing guitar, meeting new people to socialize with,

and of course, playing with my amazingly cute cat, Gamja. I will be more than happy to show you millions of photos of her if you ask me to ;).

If you have any questions regarding the committee or just want to reach out, feel free to contact me through my email (diane.seyeon.lee@gmail.com) or my Instagram ([@dianeslee](https://www.instagram.com/dianeslee)). See you at the conference!

Hwandong Hyun

Hello future members of the U.S House of Representatives! My name is Hwandong Hyun (he/him) and I am currently a junior studying the IBDP at KIS International School. By the time of this conference, this would be my eleventh conference and second time chairing. As your hybrid backroom chair for the USCC committee, I am honored to help preside over the discussions that will shape the course of the one and only United States! I am extremely excited to support and engage with what awaits us within the U.S Congress, as personally, I find the USCC one of the most interesting yet intricate committees. The rules of procedures of this unique committee might be confusing at first, but don't worry! As your chairs, Pong, Diane, and I would ensure everyone gets the best out of this conference; whether that may be honing your debating skills, diplomatic skills, or just forging new connections that extend far beyond the committee room (I promise, we three trios have great chemistry together!). Apart from MUN, I also enjoy a variety of things, whether that may be volleyball, art, golf, traveling, photography, or just struggling with my IB subjects (for my HLs; Math AA, Physics, and Visual Arts).



Anyways, if you have any questions or concerns about anything, or just to socialize really, please feel free to contact me through Instagram ([@ghksehd.hwandong](https://www.instagram.com/ghksehd.hwandong)) or email (sthwanong.hy@kis.ac.th). See you soon!-

Introduction to the US Congress

The United States Congress is the legislature of the United States. Established by Article I of the Constitution, Congress has been granted significant powers including the sole authority to enact legislation and declare war, the right to confirm or reject many Presidential appointments and substantial investigative powers. The bicameral Congress consists of two bodies, the House of Representatives and the Senate, which together form the US Congress.

The House of Representatives

The House of Representatives is the lower chamber of the United States Congress and is made up of 435 elected members, divided among the 50 states in proportion to their total population. The House, as a chamber of Congress, is charged with the passage of federal legislation or bills which must also be passed by the Senate and vice versa before the bill is sent to the President for their signature. Additionally, the House has several powers assigned exclusively to it, including the power to initiate revenue bills, impeach federal officials and elect the President in the case of an Electoral College tie. The presiding officer of the House is the Speaker of the House who is the third in line for the presidency behind the Vice President. Representative Mike Johnson (R-LA) from the Republican Party (GOP) currently holds the position as the GOP has a majority in the House with a 220-213 majority over the Democrats.

The Senate

The Senate is the upper chamber of the United States Congress and is composed of 100 Senators, 2 for each state. The Senate, as a chamber of Congress, is similarly charged with the passage of federal bills which must also be passed by the House and vice versa before the bill is sent to the President for their signature. Furthermore, the Senate also has the sole power to confirm the President's appointments that require consent (e.g. federal judges and federal agency administrators), to ratify treaties and to try impeachment cases for federal officials referred to it

by the House. The Vice President presides over the Senate and may cast a tie-breaking vote. The Democrats currently hold a 51-49 majority in the Senate over the Republicans which is sufficient to pass certain bills but could not break the filibuster which requires 60 votes to close the debate.

The Republican Party (GOP)

The Republican Party or the Grand Old Party (GOP) is one of the two major political parties in the United States, representing the right wing of the US political landscape. The Republicans have predominantly advocated for conservative positions which included socially and culturally conservative policies that uphold traditional and evangelical values such as opposing LGBTQ+ rights, abortion, affirmative action, gun control and illegal immigration with dissenting centrist and libertarian positions taken by differing factions in the party. Similarly, the Republicans have also advocated for fiscally conservative policies which include reduced government spending, tax cuts, deregulation and minimal federal debt. Notable figures from the Republican Party include former President Donald Trump, Senate Minority Leader Mitch McConnell, Speaker of the House Mike Johnson and Governor of Florida Ron DeSantis.

The Democratic Party

The Democratic Party is one of the two major political parties in the United States, representing the left wing of the US political landscape. The Democrats have predominantly advocated for liberal positions which included socially liberal and culturally progressive policies that combine civil liberty and equality with social justice such as supporting LGBTQ+ rights, abortion, affirmative action, gun control and immigration reform. At the same time, the Democrats have taken modern liberal positions on economic issues which include increased government spending through expanded social security, progressive tax and more regulations with some fiscal conservative streaks. Notable figures from the Democratic Party include President Joe Biden, Vice President Kamala Harris, Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Senator Bernie Sanders and Senator Joe Manchin.

Topic 1: The question of the Texas border dispute

Topic Introduction:



“Texas seized part of the US-Mexico border and blocked federal Border Patrol agents. Here’s what happened next” (CNN)

The dispute between Texas and the federal government is not surprising news considering the long history of the state's ongoing standoff with federal authorities over measures regarding border control. But the current standoff, particularly in Eagle Pass, is a quite unique occurrence in American history, as it involves both physical and legal confrontations between the state and federal government. The dispute intensified when Texas effectively blocked US Border Patrol agents from a 2.5-mile area in Eagle Pass, leading to a legal battle and a Supreme Court ruling in favor of federal agents to remove razor-wire put in place by Texas along the Rio Grande. This standoff has drawn support from 25 states with Republican governors, who signed a letter backing Texas in its border control fight.

The immigrant problem in the USA which reflects the broader challenges the nation faces in managing its borders and immigration policies is of great importance. Statistics indicate a complex reality, where the number of undocumented immigrants, border apprehensions, and asylum seekers all contribute to the crisis. For instance, the increase in border apprehensions, exceeding a million in the year 2021 illustrates the scale of the challenge faced by federal authorities.

The Texas border dispute, particularly in Eagle Pass, is a smaller piece of this larger crisis. Texas, with its extensive border along the Rio Grande, experiences the direct impact of increased migration flows. The state's decision to block U.S. Border Patrol agents and deploy

razor wire along the Rio Grande emphasizes the urgency Texas feels in addressing what it perceives as inadequate federal action. The legal and physical confrontations between the state and federal government in Eagle Pass symbolize the tensions inherent in navigating the competing priorities of border security, humanitarian considerations, and the rule of law. As this topic is continuously developing, it is highly suggested that delegates look into recent news updates since this chair report may not be up to date.

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Rio Grande	A significant North American river, forming part of the U.S.-Mexico border, central in discussions on immigration and border control
Standoff	A situation where opposing parties, in this case, Texas and the federal government, confront each other with neither side yielding or making progress
Asylum Seekers	Individuals who flee their home countries due to fear of persecution and apply for protection in another country, often a central aspect of the immigration crisis
Influx	The arrival or entry of a large number of people or things, such as migrants, into a place, contributing to the challenges faced by border regions.
Autonomy	The right or condition of self-government and independence; the extent to which a state or entity can make decisions without external interference.
Polarization	The division or divergence of opinions and beliefs into extreme or opposing camps, reflecting the political and ideological differences surrounding immigration issues
Razor-wire	A type of wire with sharp edges used as a security measure to create barriers, often employed in border control for restricting access

Related Legislation:

Year Introduced/ Enacted	Name	Purpose
1941	Hines v. Davidowitz	The purpose of the case was to settle the conflict between state and federal immigration regulations. The case clarified that federal immigration law takes precedence over state laws. The decision emphasized the exclusive role of the federal government in handling immigration affairs and relations with foreign nations.
2006	Secure Fence Act	A law passed in 2006 that authorized the construction of hundreds of miles of additional fencing along the U.S.-Mexico border, reflecting significant border security measures
2012	Arizona v. United States	A Supreme Court case that addressed the authority of states in immigration enforcement, providing legal context for the division of authority between the federal government and the states in immigration-related matters
2023	United States v. Abbott	The case of United States v. Abbot revolves around Texas's deployment of "marine floating barriers" in the Rio Grande, which the federal government argued posed a threat to human life, impeded navigation, and conflicted with federal authority over immigration and border security.
2024	United States v. Texas	The Justice Department filed a lawsuit against the State of Texas in 2024 to challenge Senate Bill 4 (SB 4) under the U.S. Constitution's Supremacy Clause. This legal action was taken to ensure that Texas follows the framework adopted by Congress and the federal government regarding immigration regulation

Party Stances:

The party stances regarding the Texas border dispute are divided, with Republicans supporting Texas's actions and Democrats expressing concerns. The Republican Party's position on the Texas border dispute is characterized by support for Texas's efforts for more control over the border and criticism of the Biden administration's border policies. Republicans, including former President Donald Trump, have rallied behind Governor Greg Abbott's challenges to the Biden administration's border policies, defending Texas's right to self-defense and its actions to secure the border. Texas Republicans, including Governor Greg Abbott and 25 states with Republican governors, have actively challenged the federal government over border control, implementing initiatives such as Operation Lone Star and receiving support from other Republican governors.

On the other hand, the position of the Democratic Party on the Texas border dispute is characterized by continuous efforts for a unified message on immigration and criticism of Republican actions. Texas Democrats have been seeking to address the border crisis and have accused Republicans of sabotaging border efforts by refusing to take up a rare opportunity for a bipartisan border deal. There is also an acknowledgment of the lack of a consensus position within the Democratic Party on this issue, with leading candidates often struggling to present a cohesive vision for immigration reform. The debate surrounding the border dispute reflects the complex and contentious nature of addressing border issues, with both parties expressing divergent views on how to handle the situation.

Appendix

1. [Timeline of events regarding the Texas border dispute](#)
 2. [The crisis within Texas' border crisis](#)
 3. [25 Republican governors back Texas in escalating border standoff with US government](#)
 4. [Texas Democrats and Republicans split on border proposal — not necessarily on party lines](#)
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Topic 2: The question of term limits for members of Congress



“Anti-incumbent mood fuels term limit debate” (CNN)

Topic Introduction:

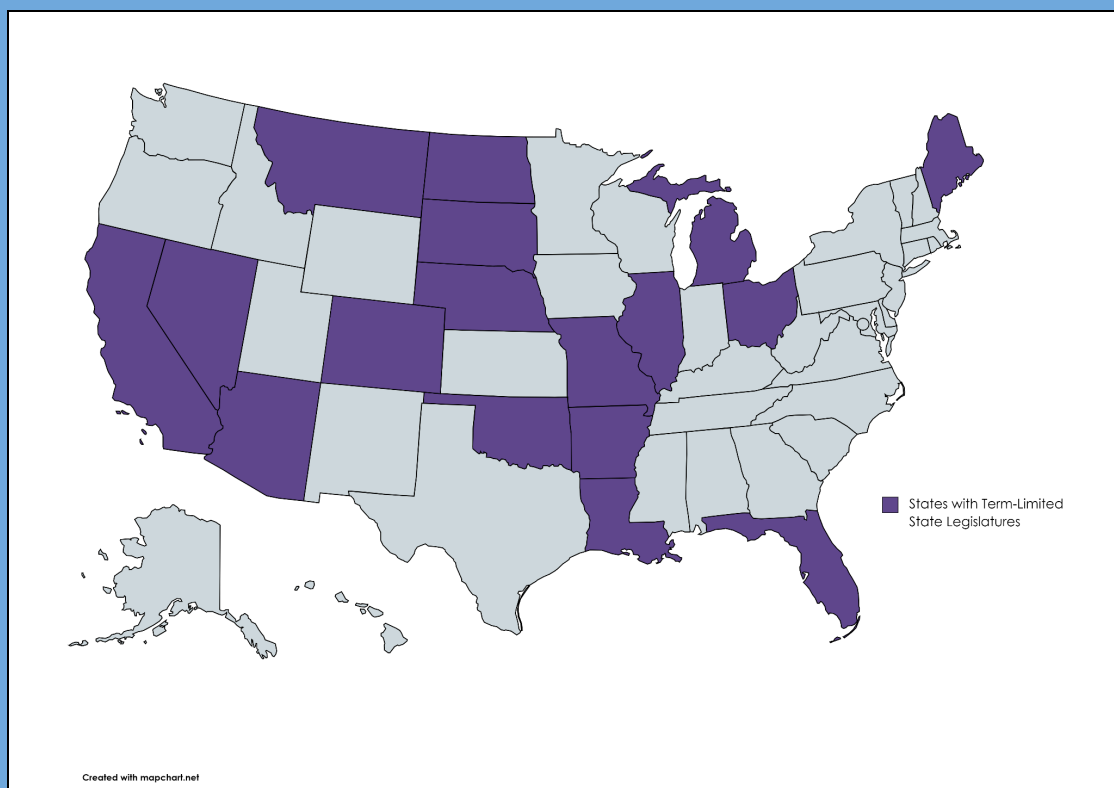
Frustration with the current political system in the United States has led to renewed interest in a number of structural changes aimed at reforming the US’s political system. One such idea which has proven to be broadly popular with the American public yet widely opposed by experts is setting term limits for members of Congress by limiting the amount of terms that they are allowed to serve. A survey by the Pew Research Center has indicated that an overwhelming majority of Americans (87%) favor term limits, making the issue one of the few contemporary political issues that appeals to people from across the political spectrum nearly equally.

However, the idea of term limits for Congress is nothing new. During the 1990s, as many as 23 states enacted term limits for state legislatures and even the state’s delegation to Congress through state legislation and state constitutional amendments at what could be considered to be the apex of the term limits movement. These laws were declared unconstitutional, however, as the Supreme Court ruled 5-4 that states cannot impose qualifications for the prospective members of Congress stricter than those the Constitution specifies in the 1995 *U.S. Term Limits, Inc. v. Thornton* which invalidated congressional term limits imposed by states. Hence recent attempts to introduce term limits for members of Congress are to be done exclusively through constitutional amendments to the US Constitution which would have to pass through Congress.

Proponents of term limits for members of Congress argue that imposing term limits on Congress is the only way to clean up the unpopular legislature by ensuring rotation in office and regular turnover of congressional seats as well as make elections more competitive by removing

the incumbency advantage. On the other hand, opponents of term limits argue that term limits already exist in the form of elections and that imposing term limits on Congress would instead diminish the average institutional knowledge and experience of members of Congress as well as further empower special interests as lawmakers cozy up to them to line up their next job.

It should be noted that numerous attempts to introduce term limits by lawmakers from both parties, most predominantly Republicans, have seen varying amounts of term limits on members of Congress proposed. From a limit of 3 to 9 terms (6-18 years) in the House to 2 to 3 terms (8-12 years) in the Senate, these proposals largely follow the precedent of 17 states which have term limits imposed on their own state legislatures which also vary from state to state.



(“Map of States with Term-Limited State Legislatures”)

KEY TERMS:

Term	Definition
Incumbent	The current holder of a particular office or position, usually in relation to an election.
Term of office	The length of time a person serves in a particular elected office. In the United States, a Representative in the House serves 2 years per term while a Senator in the Senate serves 6 years per term.
Term limit	A legal restriction on the specific number of terms a person may serve in a particular elected office.
Rotation in office	An obligation to leave office after a predetermined term of service by elected or appointed public officials.
U.S. Term Limits	A non-profit and non-partisan advocacy organization dedicated to enacting term limits for elected officials at every level of government.
Institutional knowledge	The collective understanding and ability of an organization's workforce gained through systemic training or time and experience.
Special interest	A person, group, or organization that tries to influence government decisions to benefit itself.

Related Legislation

Year Introduced/ Enacted	Name	Purpose	Status
1991	S.Amdt.255 (Amendment to S.Amdt.254 to S.Amdt.242 to S.3)	Amends S.3 to limit the use of public funds by Representatives or Senators who serve an aggregate of more than 12 years in the House and the Senate.	Tabled in the Senate (68-30).
2023	H.J.Res.11	Proposes an amendment to the Constitution to limit the number of terms members of Congress may	Defeated in the House Committee on

		serve to 3 terms (6 years) in the House and 2 terms (12 years) in the Senate.	the Judiciary (17-19).
2023	H.J.Res.5	Proposes an amendment to the Constitution to limit the number of terms members of Congress may serve to 6 terms (12 years) in the House and 2 terms (12 years) in the Senate.	Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.
2023	H.J.Res.51	Proposes an amendment to the Constitution to limit the number of consecutive terms members of Congress may serve to 5 terms (10 years) in the House and 2 terms (12 years) in the Senate after which they will be ineligible for election or appointment to Congress until one year after the end of their last consecutive term.	Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.
2023	H.J.Res.32	Proposes an amendment to the Constitution to limit the number of consecutive terms members of Congress may serve to 5 terms (10 years) in the House and 2 terms (12 years) in the Senate after which they will be ineligible for election or appointment to Congress until the first day of the second Congress that begins after the end of their last consecutive term.	Referred to the House Committee on the Judiciary.

Party Stances:

While term limits have been shown to enjoy widespread support among voters across the political spectrum, lawmakers in both parties are often less receptive or outright hostile to the idea of imposing upon themselves limits. Nevertheless, it is generally Republicans who are the ones who are most supportive of congressional term limits with their support dating back to the days of the 1994 Contract with America and its citizen legislature pledge which resulted in the defeated [H.J.Res.73](#), the only term limits bill introduced and voted upon in the House so far.

Notable Republicans who support term limits include former President Donald Trump, Senator Ted Cruz, Representative Ralph Norman (R-SC) and Representative Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA).

On the other hand, many Democrat lawmakers oppose congressional term limits as is evident from the failed votes on H.J.Res.73 and H.J.Res.11 with most Democrats believing that elections are ultimately the real term limits hence their opposition to congressional term limits. However, there exists Democrats who support term limits especially among the more moderate and centrist Democrats mostly found in the New Democrats and Blue Dogs caucuses. Notable Democrats who support term limits include former President Barack Obama, Senator John Hickenlooper, Representative Dean Philipps (D-MN) and Representative Jared Golden (D-ME).

Appendix

1. [YouTube Playlist on Term Limits for THAIMUN XI USCC Delegates](#)
 2. [A National Survey of Registered Voters on Term Limits for Members of Congress](#)
 3. [What term limits for Congress would actually do to Senate, House](#)
 4. [Why We Need Term Limits for Congress: Four in the Senate, Ten in the House](#)
 5. [Term Limits: The Only Way to Clean Up Congress](#)
 6. [Are Term Limits a Good Idea?](#)
 7. [Five reasons to oppose congressional term limits](#)
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Topic 3: The question of student loan forgiveness



“Supreme Court strikes down Biden student loan forgiveness program” (ABC News)

Topic Introduction:

According to the Federal Reserve, student loans in the United States have risen by over 66% in the past decade, and have now accumulated to a total of around 1.8 trillion USD. Worse, the cost of college has doubled over the past four decades, only increasing student loan borrowing nationwide. Over 92% of this is federal student loans (borrowed from the government), while the rest are private student loans (borrowed from banks or financial institutions).

Alongside the decreasing average wages and rising prices, most students are not able to repay their loans, causing many to be unable to pursue their life goals. As such, the number of people not being able to afford proper housing and other basic life amenities is increasing at an alarming rate. According to the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center, over 40 million students were unable to complete a degree upon loaning. This means that many borrowers aren't able to make enough money to repay their loans even after pursuing higher college education.

Research done by Research.com with over 60,000 students showed that it took an American citizen an average of 20 years to repay their education loans completely. For federal student loans, the government would place you in a 10 year repayment plan, with an average longest repayment period of 25-30 years. Furthermore, multiple loan forgiveness programs have been implemented by the government to reduce financial stress on American students in pursuing their education and life goals.

Key Terms:

Term	Definition
Loaning	Borrowing money from a body (government, bank, private, organization, etc.) temporarily before repaying in the future.
Federal Reserve	The central banking system of the United States to centralize and manage financial control.
Student Debt	Funds of money owed to pay for one’s education.
Federal Student Loans	Lending money from the government to cover educational expenses and debt.
Private Student Loans	Lending money from private organizations, banks, or financial institutions to cover educational expenses and debt.
Interest	Money paid regularly at a particular rate for the use of money lent, or for delaying the repayment of a debt.
Repayment Plan	Fixed plan for repaying a loan over time, often in fixed monthly payments.
IDR (income driven repayment) plan	Structuring a repayment plan based on personal income and family size to make repayment more manageable.

Related Laws, Programs, and Legislations Enacted or Considered

Year Introduced /Enacted	Name	Purpose	Status
1958	National Defense Education Act of 1958	U.S. federal law enacted during the Cold War to bolster education in STEM to enhance national competitiveness through federal funding for student scholarships, low-interest loans, and teacher training programs.	Effective, signed on September 2, 1958

1965	Higher Education Act of 1965	Act aimed at expanding access to higher education. Introduced during President Lyndon B. Johnson's Great Society initiative, the HEA provided federal financial assistance, including grants, loans, and work-study programs, to postsecondary students. Made higher education more attainable for a diverse student population.	Effective, signed on November 8, 1965, amended and reauthorized in 2008.
1965	Federal Family Education Loan (FFELP) Program	FFELP was operational from 1965 to 2010 in the U.S., facilitated student loans through private lenders like banks, which were then federally guaranteed against default. However, with the 2010 Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act, the FFELP was phased out in favor of Direct Lending, where federal loans were issued directly by the U.S. Department of Education (DOE).	Effective, enacted upon the Higher Education Act of 1965
2010	Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act	A U.S. law designed to overhaul the federal student loan system. It sought to replace the Federal Family Education Loan (FFEL) Program, which utilized private lenders, with Direct Lending, enabling federal loans to be disbursed directly by the U.S. DOE. SAFRA's goal was to streamline the loan process, potentially reduce costs, and enhance efficiency in providing financial assistance to students.	Effective, signed on March 30, 2010
2020	Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act	In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, it allocated about \$2.2 trillion in relief funds, offering direct payments to individuals, bolstered unemployment benefits, business support via the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), and funding for healthcare and testing. It	Effective, signed on March 27, 2020

		halted federal student loan payments and interest accrual until September 2020.	
2020	Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act	Proposed extending the suspension of payments and interest on federal student loans in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, offering temporary relief to borrowers. Additionally, it aimed to allocate funding to support higher education institutions facing financial challenges due to the crisis. However, the act did not advance in the Senate in its original form, and subsequent legislative and executive actions further influenced student loan policies and financial aid provisions.	Effective, passed by senate on May 15, 2020
2023	Federal Assistance to Initiate Repayment (FAIR) Act	A Republican solution to fix the student loan system, helping millions of borrowers return to repayment and protects taxpayers by putting an end to Biden’s radical free college agenda. To streamline and improve the Federal student loan repayment system to protect borrowers and taxpayers simultaneously.	Announced and considered on June 15, 2023
2023-2024	Lowering Education Costs and Debt Act	The proposal suggests a comprehensive set of reforms aimed at enhancing transparency, refining the student loan system, and implementing stricter accountability measures in a financially prudent manner. It urges the President to abandon expensive individual student debt cancellation initiatives and collaborate with Congress on a more effective strategy to genuinely enhance college affordability and outcomes, rather than solely	Announced on June 14, 2023

		providing student aid.	
2023-2024	Graduate Opportunity and Affordable Loans (GOAL) Act	Discontinues inflation-driven Graduate PLUS loans, aiming to curb escalating tuition fees by restricting borrowing for graduate studies. It also empowers institutions to establish specific loan caps for each program, safeguarding students from excessive borrowing.	Introduced on June 14, 2023

Party Stances:

The problem of student loan forgiveness has been one of the biggest debates between the democrat and republican party. Both parties have shown their stances on how the problem is approached differently. As such, the democrat party is more inclined towards providing a larger group of people with educational debt and fiscal support, whether this may be through making more people eligible to apply for loans. Moreover, many programs have been proposed to articulate plans to effectively hand out loans to people, such as the income-driven repayment student loan plan (IDR plan). Student debt cancellation has also been preferred, especially after the socio-economic devastation the COVID-19 pandemic had caused, under the HEROES act. This initiative has been signed and proposed by many members of the senate and house of representatives, such as majority leader Chuck Schumer, Elizabeth Warren, Raphael Warnock, house minority leader Hakeem Jeffries, Robert Garcia, Eric Sorensen, and dozens of more democrats.

On the other hand, many republicans have a more conservative approach to this issue. As such, rather than loaning out more money and supporting students in debt, the republicans often advocate for lowering tuition costs and addressing the problems constituting the large sums of student debt. Moreover, the republicans are more inclined to promoting equality for all taxpayers and stakeholders. They often blame the high sums of loaning from the government to be the reason for such high student debt, as college tuition has jumped over 70% from 2001 to 2023. Additionally, some ivy league universities in the U.S. have tuition at around 80,000 USD. Representatives such as Jared Golden of Maine, Marie Gluesenkamp Perez of Washington, and dozens of other representatives have supported bills from senators Tommy Tuberville and Bill Cassidy on providing solutions regarding student loans.

Appendix

Videos

1. [All student debt in the US, visualized - Vox](#)
2. [Why Is College So Expensive In America - CNBC](#)
3. [The US Supreme Court just shot down student debt forgiveness - Vox](#)
4. [The Student Debt Dilemma - CBS](#)
5. [Congress debates student debt plan - Fox 9](#)

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