

A Resolution in Support of the GradsHaveDebt2 Campaign

WHEREAS, the eligibility for graduate students to access subsidized Stafford loans was removed in 2012 by the United States Congress, and graduate students had been paying 6.8% interest rates for the past seven years, and

WHEREAS, the average cumulative debt for an undergraduate degree is \$23,800, while the average cumulative debt is \$52,000 for a Master's degree and \$72,000 for a doctoral degree^[1] and

WHEREAS, during the Congressional student loan debates in the summer of 2013, very little attention was given to graduate student loan debt and the inequality of setting interest rates based on the level of education rather than financial need, and

WHEREAS, the current federal student loan plan sets interest rate caps for undergraduate loans at 8.25%; graduate student loans at 9.50%, and grad plus loans at 10.50%, which represents the first time in history that Congress has set different rates for student loans based on the level of education rather than financial need, and

WHEREAS, The Office of Management and Budget projects that the graduate student loan interest rate will surpass the pre-2013 rate of 6.8% by 2015, and continue to increase toward the 9.5% cap, as the economy improves, and

WHEREAS, the graduate-professional student default rate, as reported for the 2010 cohort, is significantly lower (6.1%) than the overall default rate (17.6%)^[2], making graduate-professional student loans a safe financial investment for the federal government, and

WHEREAS, GradsHaveDebt2 is a national campaign conducted by the National Association of Graduate-Professional Students (NAGPS) and its members, with the purpose of raising awareness and educating legislators and the public about graduate-professional student loan inequality and the large debt burden the average graduate student faces,

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Baylor University Graduate Student Association, the official organization representing all graduate students at Baylor University, officially endorses the GradsHaveDebt2 campaign, and

THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Graduate Student Association pledges to support the GradsHaveDebt2 campaign by participating in its activities, such as call-in events, letter drives, and social media campaigns.

^[1] Cumulative debt calculated by FinAid.org for 2013 graduates.

^[2] Budget Lifetime Default rates, based on dollars for a projected cohort life of 20 years. Source: U.S. Department of Education.