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Opinion

White House Proposes \$9.2 Billion Education Cut

No one ever said that higher education wouldn't cost money. Across the country, tuition is steadily rising and students are taking longer to pay off their student loans.

Today, 44 million consumers share \$1.4 trillion in borrowed student debt — more than double what it was in 2008. On average, graduating seniors with a bachelor's degree begin their careers with about \$30,000 in student loans, while graduate students are almost assured of incurring six-figure student debt.

All of these financial burdens have been acquired against a backdrop of an increasingly competitive global economy.

The 21st century marketplace is also dependent upon a highly-skilled workforce. Gone are the days when manufacturing could provide a steady and comfortable living. From steel to textiles and more, global competition requires America to work smarter and harder.

So why would the Trump Administration propose a \$9.2 billion cut in education?

Over the next decade, the White House wants to 'save' \$143 billion from college loan programs, including an end to \$26.8 billion in subsidized loans. Currently, Pell Grants, designed to assist low-income

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Columnist

students, are capped at less than \$6,000 per scholastic year despite the average cost of tuition at a public college for its own state students approaching \$10,000 per year.

Here's one White House explanation on how less access

“Student loan debt is the kind of debt that could potentially follow borrowers to the grave

to higher education going to help the nation's ability to remain economically competitive.

“We're no longer going to measure compassion by the number of programs or the number of people on those programs, but by the number of people we help get off of those programs,” said White House Budget Director Mick Mulvaney during a May 23 press briefing.

It seems like the White House is really averse to more Americans receiving a higher education at a time when college costs and its resulting debt are on an upward trajectory.

Certainly, education budget cuts will not 'make America great again'.

Two days later and on the floor of the U.S. Senate, a diverging view was spoken, “Let's give struggling students a fair chance,” said Illinois' Senator Richard Durbin.

“We are seeing an increase in the wealth gap between college graduates with student debt and those without student debt”, Durbin continued. “The burdens of student debt are threatening the notion that being college-educated is

of a bankruptcy filing. In other words, it's the kind of debt that could potentially follow borrowers to the grave.

The Fairness for Struggling Students Act of 2017 (S. 1262), introduced by Sen. Durbin and co-sponsored by 11 other Senators would allow financially struggling borrowers to discharge private student loans in bankruptcy.

The law is anticipated to relieve high-cost private loans that seldom come with many of the flexible repayment terms offered by federal ones. Some private student loans come with variable interest rates, high origination fees and scant — if any — repayment options.

Already the bill has attracted the support of a large coalition of educational, student, civil rights and consumer organizations that include: the United Negro College Fund (UNCF), NAACP, the American Federation of Teachers, the Empire Justice Center, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, and the Center for Responsible Lending (CRL).

According to the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau (CFPB), in 2012, at least 850,000 private loan borrowers were in default in the amount of \$8 billion.

Read the rest of this commentary at
TheSkanner.com

Nooses on National Mall Echo Domestic Terrorism

U.S. Park Police confirmed that another noose was found on the National Mall, last week, according to ABC News.

Late last month, a portion of the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture (NMAAHC) in Washington, D.C., was closed for nearly three hours after a noose was found in a gallery, officials said.

The museum, on the National Mall near the White House, reopened fully later that day, after police deemed the area “safe and secure,” according to an internal memo provided to ABC News by the Smithsonian.

In an article posted to the Smithsonian's, museum officials said that the noose is a reminder of “America's dark history with lynching” and referred to similar incidents of noose sightings around the country including at a school in Missouri, a construction site in Maryland, on the campus of Duke University, at a fraternity house on University of Maryland's campus, at a middle school in Maryland and at a high school in Lake-wood, California.

Tourists found the noose in

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the museum's exhibit on segregation.

The incident at NMAAHC occurred after a noose was found on May 26 hanging from a tree outside the Hirshhorn Museum, which is located

“Tourists found the noose in the museum's exhibit on segregation

ed close to the Black History museum.

In an email to museum staffers, Lonnie Bunch, the director of NMAAHC, said that the incident is a painful reminder of the challenges that African Americans continue to face.

“The noose has long represented a deplorable act of cowardice and depravity—a symbol of extreme violence for African-Americans,” said Bunch.

On May 30, at Wakefield High School in Raleigh, N.C. a Black doll with a noose around its neck was suspended

outside of a window.

“Let me be clear: This was an offensive act that has no place in our school. The imagery is deeply offensive and everyone in our school community should be appalled,” said Principal Malik Bazzell, as reported by on Raleigh TV.

During a rally at the a park named after Confederate Civil War General Robert E. Lee Charlottesville, Va., on May 13, participants with torches chanted “Russia is our friend” and “you shall not erase us.”

According to ThinkProgress.org, the rally was in response to “the state's decision to sell off a statue of treasonous general Robert E. Lee, who led the Confederate Army of Northern Virginia against the United States during the Civil War.”

ThinkProgress.org also reported, “Charlottesville Mayor Mike Signer condemned the rally and its attendees.”

On May 26, in Portland, Oregon, a man named Jeremy Christian hurled anti-Muslim vitriol on a subway train at two young women, then

murdered two men who intervened, Taliesin Namkai-Meche, 23, and Ricky Best, 53, and injured a third, Micah Fletcher.

On May 20, Richard Collins, 23 year-old second lieutenant in the Army, was stabbed to death by University of Maryland student Sean Urbanski, 22, as Collins waited with friends for a ride. Lt. Collins was about to graduate from Bowie State University on May 23. The FBI is investigating the murder as a possible hate crime and it has already been reported that Urbanski was a member of an “alt-right” group on Facebook.

On the eve of the NBA Finals, Cleveland Cavaliers star LeBron James' Los Angeles home was vandalized; the “N-word” was written with spray paint on his house.

“Just shows that racism will always be a part of the world, part of America. Hate in America, especially for African-Americans, is living every day. It is hidden most days. It is alive every single day,” James told reporters. “No matter how much money you have, how famous you are, how much people admire you, being Black in America is tough.”