Federal Student Loans

2021 Federal Priorities for the Student Debt Crisis

Policy Analysis

Reports, Briefs & Videos

- NCLC/SBPC/CRL Issue Brief: Restoring the Promise of Income-Driven Repayment: An IDR Waiver Program Proposal, Jan. 12, 2022
- Issue Brief: Delivering on the Child Tax Credit: Protect Payments from Government Offset, September, 2021
- Policy Brief: Education Department’s Decades-Old Debt Trap: How the Mismanagement of Income-Driven Repayment Locked Millions in Debt, March 2021; press release
- NCLC/CRL report: Road to Relief: Supporting Federal Student Loan Borrowers During the COVID-19 Crisis and Beyond, Nov. 2020; press release
- Brief: Borrowing From Our Future: The Case for Cancelling Student Debt, Aug. 10, 2020
- Report: Voices of Despair – How Seizing the EITC is Leaving Student Loan Borrowers Homeless and Hopeless During a Pandemic, July 2020; press release
- Video Explainer: What the CARES Act Means for Repayment of Federal Student Loans, April 21, 2020
- Brief: Congress Must Provide Relief to Defaulted Student Loan Borrowers; Recommendations for Higher Education Act Reauthorization, March 2020
- Brief: Three Tax Fixes to Improve the Federal Student Aid Program (NCLC and TICAS), March 2020
- Fact Sheet: What States Can Do to Protect Consumers: Student Loans, January 2020

More reports, briefs, & videos

Comments

- Joint Memo by NCLC, CLASP & TICAS: Recommendation to Amend Law to Prohibit Offset of EITC and CTC, February 10, 2022
- Comment from NCLC and 30 other legal aid and advocacy organizations responding to the Department of Education’s continued use of a borrower defense application form for Corinthian Colleges borrowers, asking that the Department instead provide a group discharge to those borrowers, Feb. 9, 2022
- Coalition comments re: Federal Preemption and Joint Federal-State Regulation and Oversight of the Department of Education’s Federal Student Loan Programs and Federal Student Loan Servicers (Docket ID ED-2021-OS-0107), Sept. 13, 2021
- Joint NCLC and LAFLA comments to the Department of Education on HEA Negotiated Rulemaking, July 1, 2021
- Coalition comments to the Department of Education Sharing its Negotiated Rulemaking Priorities and Concerns About Title IV Funds, July 1, 2021
- Comments from NCLC and 37 legal services organizations to the Department of Education on
HEA Negotiated Rulemaking, July 1, 2021

- Joint comments to the Department of Education re facilitating automatic student loan discharged for certain military veterans, Jan. 27, 2020
- Joint comments to the CFPB re: student loan borrower concerns re: proposed debt collection rule, Sept. 18, 2019
- Comments to the Department of Education re: Proposed Regulations on Recognition of Accrediting Agencies and Recognition Procedures for State Agencies, July 11, 2019

More comments

Testimony

- NCLC attorney Persis SiChing Yu testimony Before the U.S. Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs Subcommittee on Economic Policy re: “Protecting Student Loan Borrowers and the Economy in Upcoming Transitions,” July 27, 2021
- NCLC attorney Persis Yu testimony before the U.S. House Financial Services Committee on A $1.5 Trillion Crisis: Protecting Student Borrowers and Holding Student Loan Servicers Accountable, Sept. 10, 2019; Press Release
- Testimony of NCLC attorney John Rao at the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee hearing on “Oversight of Bankruptcy Law and Legislative Proposals,” held on June 25, 2019, and focusing on the discharge of student loans in bankruptcy
- NCLC attorney Joanna K. Darcus' testimony to the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Oversight and Investigations re: “An Examination of State Efforts to oversee the $1.5 Trillion Student Loan Servicing Market,” June 11, 2019; Press Release
- NCLC attorney Joanna K. Darcus testimony to the U.S. House Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education re: “Protecting Student Borrowers: Loan Servicing Oversight”, March 6, 2019

More testimony

Letters

- Group Letter to Secretary Yellen re: CTC and EITC Protection from Offset, Feb. 17, 2022
- Group Letter from over 200 organizations to President Biden urging extension of the pause on student loan payments, December 8, 2021
- Group Letter to the Department of Education discussing the impact of restarting repayment and involuntary repayment on defaulted borrowers, November 1, 2021
- Group Letter to President Biden urging immediate action to extend the current pause on student loan payments, June 24, 2021
- Group Letter to Secretary of Education Cardona in Support of Petition to Provide Relief for Borrowers with Disabilities, June 11, 2021
- Group Letter to Secretary of Education Cardona Requesting Relief for the Borrower Defense Fund, April 13, 2021
- NCLC and SBPC letter to Acting Secretary of Education Rosenfelt Calling for Immediate Covid-19 Relief for Commercial Federal Family Education Loan Program (FFELP) Borrowers, February 16, 2021
- NCLC and 237 other organizations call on Biden Administration to Cancel Student Loan Debt on Day 1, Nov. 18, 2020
• Group letter to U.S. Senate opposing the Safely Back to School and Back to Work Act, July 28, 2020
• Consumer and industry groups’ letter urging Congress to extend CARES Act relief to all federal student loan borrowers, April 13, 2020

More letters

Press Releases

• Joint Press Release: Advocates to Treasury Secretary Yellen: Protect CTC and EITC Payments in Tax Refunds, Feb. 17, 2022
• Press Release: Advocates Applaud Department of Education Decision to Protect CTC Payments in Tax Refunds from Seizure, Feb. 9, 2022
• Joint Press Release: The System is Broken: 100+ Organizations Urge Biden Administration to Aid Millions of Student Loan Borrowers with Overdue Income-Driven Repayment (IDR) Reforms, Feb. 9, 2022
• Joint Press Release: Advocacy Groups Request Meeting with Biden Administration Regarding the Impact of Student Loan Debt on Black Women, Jan. 31, 2022
• Joint Press Release: Borrower Advocates Demand that Education Department Restore the Promise of Income-Driven Repayment, Jan. 12, 2022
• Press Release: NCLC Advocate Applauds the Biden Administration Extension of the Pause on Federal Student Loan Payments, but More Needs to Be Done, Dec. 22, 2021
• Press Release: U.S. Department of Education to Extend Federal Student Loan Servicing Contracts for Two Years, Oct. 15, 2021
• Press Release: Troubled Servicer Navient to Exit Federal Student Loan System, Sept. 28, 2021
• Press Release: Statement in Response to Education Department’s Announcement on Student Loan Discharges for ITT Tech Students, Aug. 26, 2021
• Statement of NCLC’s Persis Yu re: extension of student loan payment pause until 2022, Aug. 6, 2021
• Statement on PHEAA Not Extending its Servicer Contract with Dept. of Education, July 8, 2021
• National Consumer Law Center Advocates Support Education Department Giving Loan Relief for 18,000 Former ITT Students but Urge More Action, June 16, 2021
• Statement on Education Department’s Appointment of Richard Cordray to Oversee Trillion Dollar Federal Student Aid, May 4, 2021
• NCLC and SPBC Statements on Partial Administrative Action to Protect Student Loan Borrowers During the Pandemic, March 30, 2021
• U.S. Department of Education’s Action on Discharges for Borrowers with Total and Permanent Disabilities Falls Short, Mar. 29, 2021
• Joint Statement: Advocates Urge President-Elect Biden to Provide More Student Debt Relief, January 8, 2020
• Joint Statement: We Applaud Pressley/Omar/Adams/Waters Resolution to Cancel Student, December 22, 2020
• NCLC Advocates Applaud Schumer/Warren Senate Resolution Calling for $50,000 in Debt Cancellation for 43 Million Student Loan Borrowers, Sept. 17, 2020
• Student Loan Borrowers Need Real Relief, Not a COVID Stimulus Plan that Will Bury Them Deeper in Debt, July 27, 2020
• Advocates Praise Senators for Bold Student Loan Principles, March 19, 2020
More press releases

Litigation


**Share your story if you have had wages garnished in 2020 for a student loan.** NCLC and Student Defense, with support of the Student Borrower Protection Center, filed an emergency APA lawsuit in the D.C. District Court against the U.S. Department of Education seeking to stop its garnishment of wages from defaulted student loan borrowers and to force the agency to immediately comply with Sec. 3513 (e) of the CARES Act that mandates that all such collections be ceased until at least next September. As reported by the Washington Post, the Education Dept. estimates that 285,000 borrowers are still having their wages garnished. A motion for injunctive relief class certification has also been filed.

- **Robinson v National Student Clearinghouse, April 18, 2019** Complaint

The Francis & Mailman firm, along with the National Consumer Law Center and Justice Catalyst Law filed a class action lawsuit against the National Student Clearinghouse (“NSC”) in the United States Federal District Court for the District of Massachusetts. The suit alleges that NSC maintains vast databases housing detailed information about college students and their college enrollment history from which it sells reports to potential creditors, insurers and employers among others. As such, the complaint asserts that NSC is a credit reporting agency under the Federal Fair Credit Reporting Act and the Massachusetts Credit Reporting Act and that it has violated those statutes by requiring unlawful and excessive charges for consumers to access their files. The complaint also asserts that the disclosure overcharges constitute unfair conduct in violation of the Massachusetts Consumer Protection Act. The plaintiff seeks to have the overcharging practices enjoined, the unlawful and excessive charges returned, applicable statutory damages and punitive awards for the willful and knowing violations of the consumer statutes.

- **National Consumer Law Center v. United States Department of Education, Nov. 16, 2018,** Complaint

The National Consumer Law Center filed a lawsuit in the U.S. District Court for the District of Massachusetts against the U.S. Department of Education to compel compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (FOIA). NCLC submitted a FOIA request in October 2017 to ED seeking the release of records associated with ED’s arrangements with Maximus Federal Services, Inc., or any other party operating in whole or in part under the name Default Resolution Group. FOIA requires that agencies have 20 working days to make a determination on the request. To date, thirteen months after receipt of NCLC’s Request, ED has not communicated to NCLC its determination as to NCLC’s Request, nor provided NCLC with any responsive documents.

- **Amicus Curiae Brief of Public Law Center, NCLC, Public Counsel in Support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for Preliminary Injunction in Case Challenging Dep’t of Education’s Abandonment of Full Loan Relief for Defrauded Corinthian Students (Manriquez v. DeVos, April 16, 2018)**
- **Amici Curiae Brief of National Consumer Law Center and 17 organizations in Support of Plaintiffs’ Motion for Summary Judgment in Case Challenging Department of Education’s**
- Case against the United States Department of Education: The National Consumer Law Center is co-counsel in a Freedom of Information Act suit requesting public records of the U.S. Department of Education regarding race and debt collection practices of third-party debt collectors hired by the Department: Complaint, Exhibit 1 (FOIA request, May 7, 2015), Exhibit 2, Exhibit 3, and Exhibit 4, and press release

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