

(February 8, 2008) Lipinski Helps Pass Bill to Improve College Affordability

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WASHINGTON – On Thursday Rep. Dan Lipinski (D-IL) helped the House of Representatives pass H.R. 4137, the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, by a vote of 354-58. The bill, which builds on a law passed last year that made the largest federal investment in college financial aid since the GI Bill of 1944, includes additional steps to make college more affordable and accessible.

“As a former college professor, I know how critical a college education is and I understand how expensive it has become, loading down students and their families with large debts coming out of college,” said Rep. Lipinski. “This new legislation builds on last year's historic investments in college affordability by helping hold down rising tuition costs, simplifying the financial aid application process, and reforming unscrupulous student lending practices. I am proud to have played a role in accomplishing this victory for middle class families.”

H.R. 4137 is a comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, the primary federal law aimed at expanding college access for low- and middle-income students. The legislation seeks to reform and strengthen the nation’s higher education programs to ensure that they operate in the best interests of students and families.

Specifically, the legislation expands access to college by improving financial aid programs and removing obstacles that deter qualified students, such as complicated financial aid applications and predatory lending practices. It also sheds sunlight on tuition increases and textbook prices, while holding colleges and universities accountable for their role in keeping higher education affordable. In addition, the bill would give consumers access to quality information about college costs that can be sorted, searched, and compared.

“Making college more affordable is essential to building a strong middle class, ensuring America's competitiveness by investing in a new generation of innovators, and creating good paying jobs here at home,” stated Lipinski. “I am proud to be helping make this investment in our children's future and our nation's economy.”