



# NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF GRADUATE-PROFESSIONAL STUDENTS

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Organization: [National Association of Graduate-Professional Students](http://NationalAssociationofGraduate-ProfessionalStudents.org)

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### **POTUS Budget Proposal Bad for Graduate-Professional Students, Higher Ed, and the Economy**

On March 11th, 2019 the White House released the President's budget proposal for the coming fiscal year which calls for a 12%, or \$7 billion, reduction to the U.S. Department of Education's budget. Specifically targeted in those cuts are the elimination of Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) and subsidized student loans, and also reforming Income Based Repayment. The President's budget also calls for major cuts in funding to the National Science Foundation (NSF), the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and a number of other federal agencies that fund scientific research. The budget proposal also calls for eliminating of the National Endowment for Arts, the National Endowment for Humanities, and \$5 billion in cuts from programs that serve low-income students and students of color.

The National Association of Graduate Professional Students (NAGPS) believes these provisions in the President's budget will be detrimental to graduate-professional students and higher education, in general, as they will reduce affordability, limit access, increase student debt, and stifle scientific discovery. NAGPS urges the U.S. Congress to pass a budget that supports higher education, not diminishes it; that increases access and affordability; and advances scientific discovery.

Student loan debt currently totals \$1.5 trillion in the U.S. and is the second largest form of consumer debt. At a time when students should be provided with more opportunities to affordably fund their education and repay their loans, the President's budget is forecasted to increase student loan debt by \$207 billion over the next ten years. The PSLF program seeks to relieve the burden on student loan borrowers by forgiving the remaining balance of the borrower's loans after 10 years worth of qualifying payments if they work for a qualifying employer. The President's budget eliminates the PSLF program even though, to date, only 423 (1% of all applicants) applications for PSLF have been approved with a mere 206 (0.5% of all applicants) receiving forgiveness. PSLF should be strengthened by reform and not eliminated.

Cutting funding to the NSF, NIH, and other federal agencies that fund scientific research will hurt higher education, especially graduate students. Grants from these agencies support graduate education at U.S. institutions of higher education by funding research assistantships, and fellowships that seeks to cure diseases like cancer, and advance the frontiers of computer science, engineering, and other STEM fields. Cutting funding would also limit scientific discovery and delay the development of technology that ultimately leads to job creation, expansion of existing industries, and the creation of new industries. The U.S. has been a global leader in higher education and scientific research, and continued cuts to its funding will result in the U.S. losing ground to its global competitors.

NAGPS will continue to engage with our legislators to impress upon them the importance of adequately investing in accessible and affordable higher education, and scientific research; that supports economic growth and job creation, and maintains the U.S. position as a global leader.

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*[NAGPS](http://NAGPS.org) is a national non-profit composed of graduate and professional student governments across the US. NAGPS represents hundreds of thousands of graduate and professional students at a diverse group of member institutions.*