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United Council Applauds *Higher Ed, Lower Debt* Bill Introduction

On Wednesday, October 16, 2013 One Wisconsin Institute invited UC to a press conference hosted by Wisconsin State Rep. Cory Mason (D-Racine) and Sen. Dave Hansen (D-Green Bay) to announce the *Higher Ed, Lower Debt* bill which, at first read, is a unique Wisconsin solution to the crisis that is student loan debt.

This bill is in line with UC's [Student Debt Campaign](#) and has four overarching functions:

- Create a state authority to help borrowers refinance their student loans, just like you can a home mortgage;
- Allow borrowers to deduct their student loan payments on their state income taxes, just like you can with home mortgage interest;
- Require borrowers be given detailed information before entering into loan agreements, offer counseling to students and parents on the implications of student loans and require the state to collect and disseminate information about private lenders and maintain a ranking system;
- Track information about student loan debt in the state to help policy makers better understand the depth and breadth of the debt crisis in Wisconsin.

(Source: onewisconsinnow.org)

The bill also establishes an empowered state authority to help Wisconsin citizens from 18-60 y.o (and beyond) who are currently suffering under a mountain of student loans after acquiring a degree, which Sen. Hansen said is "a requirement to obtain a family supportive wage". This authority will include permanent seats for university students - a great statement to the necessity of student voices in matters which concern them and define their lives.

UC applauds the efforts of the Wisconsin State Legislature to take a stance on student loan debt and will work closely with all involved in this effort. We agree with Rep. Mason who said that current students and graduates are the "brain power" of Wisconsin. UC plans to analyze the bill and inform students about its implications in the near future.

To stay informed about UC's Student Debt Campaign please visit our website at www.unitedcouncil.net; follow us on Twitter [@unitedcouncil](https://twitter.com/unitedcouncil) or 'like' us on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/unitedcouncil).