NSDA Public Forum Debate (Nov-Dec 2023)
Topic: Student Loan Forgiveness

PROS AND CONS OF STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS (REJOINDERS, ver. 11.10)

INTRODUCTION (PRO): First Speakers, Summary Speech.

[Rejoinder Speech: 3 min]

"In this speech, I will **defend** each of my team's arguments.

The first argument I will **defend** is… _____ ."

REJOINDER-01 (PRO): Reducing Financial Burdens

They said we were wrong about... reducing financial burdens.

However, we were not wrong because...

First… Reducing Stress, Depression, and Suicide
S: According to... Scientific American, August 24, 2023
https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/student-loan-debt-takes-a-toll-on-a-vulnerable-populations-mental-health1/
Q: *It states…* Another study, published in April 2023 in the journal Addictive Behaviors, followed 331 college graduates and linked high debt levels with problematic drinking, anxiety and depression, especially among the most economically insecure graduates. In some cases, borrowers even expressed suicidal thoughts. Similarly, a March 2021 survey from the financial services company Student Loan Planner found that one in 14 participants within a group of about 2,300 loan borrowers with a high level of debt reported having suicidal thoughts that they attributed to that plight.
F: *In other words…* an April 2023 study shows that college graduates with high amounts of debt were more likely to suffer from drinking problems, severe stress, and depression with some having thoughts of suicide.
C: *This means…* by forgiving student debt, we help millions of people who are suffering from all the stress.

Also… Reducing Pain for Racial Minorities
S: According to... Harvard Law School, October 2023
https://clp.law.harvard.edu/knowledge-hub/magazine/issues/student-debt/what-we-owe-our-students/
Q: *It states…* In 20 years, the median Black borrower owes 95 percent of what she borrowed 20 years ago. She's going to be paying on that debt until she dies. And it's because every factor comes together. African Americans borrow more money to go to school, borrow more money while they're in school, and then have a harder time paying it off when they get out of school. You start out with more debt and then you encounter the implications of job and salary discrimination and that just compounds the effect of that debt. Miss a payment, spend a longer period unemployed, and you go into default, and default rates carry interest, and the whole thing balloons.
F: *In other words...* After 20 years, the average white borrower still owes about 6% of their student loan debt, but the average Black borrower still owes around 95% of what they originally borrowed.
C: *This means...* millions of people are suffering so much because of their debt problems, and it seems to last for decades of debt. Forgiveness will remove this pain.

3.) Finally...

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Therefore, we were NOT wrong about... reducing financial burdens.

PROS & CONS OF STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS (REJOINDERS): *Continued…*

REJOINDER-02 (PRO): Improving the Economy

They said we were wrong about... improving the economy.

However, we were not wrong because...

1.) First… $108 Billion Dollar Boost to GDP
S: According to... the Roosevelt Institute, January 2021
https://rooseveltinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/RI_UnburdenedCancellingStudentDebt_FactSheet_202101.pdf
Q: *It states…* Broad student debt cancellation can stimulate the macroeconomy and boost GDP. Freeing up funds through debt cancellation would allow millions of borrowers to spend into the broader economy. Short-term consumption levels could be boosted by as much as 4 percent, increasing real GDP by between $86 billion and $108 billion over 10 years.
F: *In other words...* Freeing up funds through debt cancellation would allow millions of borrowers to spend more in the economy. This can increase our GDP by up to $108 billion over the next ten years.
C: *This means...* cancelling student debt will stimulate the economy for everyone's benefit making hundreds of millions of people better off with more opportunities to improve their quality of life.

2.) Also… Inflation is the Wrong Focus
S: According to... the Center for American Progress, August 23, 2022
https://www.americanprogress.org/article/canceling-student-debt-of-at-least-10000-will-help-lower-the-cost-of-living/
Q: *It states...* Commentary has been increasingly focused on whether student debt cancellation will exacerbate inflation. However, inflation is not the lens one should use to analyze the student debt crisis. The student debt crisis predates current inflationary pressures and is part of a decades-long affordability struggle challenging the 43 million Americans who are student loan borrowers as well as their households. The costs of student loan debt have been increasing faster than income for years as the volume of student loan debt has grown from around $750 billion to $1.6 trillion since 2010. Targeted student debt cancellation of at least $10,000 will help millions of Americans better manage their budgets, build wealth, and reduce the racial wealth gap, immediately improving financial security and laying the foundation for faster upward economic mobility.
F: *In other words...* it is wrong to focus on inflation when considering the struggle of tens of millions of people who would be better able to manage their budgets, build wealth, and reduce the racial wealth gap.
C: *This means...* full student loan cancellation would help even more - inflation is already happening - we shouldn't use it as an excuse to allow millions of families to continue to struggle with student loan debt.

3.) Finally...

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Therefore, we were NOT wrong about... improving the economy.

PROS & CONS OF STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS (REJOINDERS): *Continued…*

INTRODUCTION (CON): First Speakers, Summary Speech.

[Rejoinder Speech: 3 min]

"In this speech, I will **defend** each of my team's arguments.

The first argument I will **defend** is… _____ ."

REJOINDER-01 (CON): Lacking Effectiveness

They said we were wrong about... forgiveness lacking effectiveness.

However, we were not wrong because...

1.) First… "Targeted Debt Relief" is Better
S: According to... Council on Foreign Relations, Last Updated: August 22, 2023
https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-student-loan-debt-trends-economic-impact#chapter-title-0-7
Q: *It states*… Targeted debt relief. These plans would forgive most or all debt for borrowers who make under a certain income, and supporters of targeted relief often advocate for income-driven repayment (IDR) plans. IDRs allow borrowers to pay an amount proportional to their income, and have their remaining balance cleared after ten years assuming they've made all qualifying payments. While proponents argue that targeting the lowest-income borrowers is the fairest approach, critics say that it would do little to stop universities from raising tuition and other costs.
F: *In other words*... Targeted relief is the fairest approach, helping people who are struggling and it will not cancel the debt of those who are not. The payment depends on their income and is canceled in ten years.
C: *This means*... forgiving ALL student loan debt is a costly mistake. The government is currently using IDR, which is the fairest system, and won't cancel debt for the wealthy – *the PRO side cancels everyone's debt*!

2.) Also… "SAVE Act" Prevents Harm from Interest Rates
S: According to… CNBC News, August 31, 2023
https://www.cnbc.com/2023/08/31/save-student-debt-repayment-plan-pros-and-cons.html
Q: *It states...* Cap on interest: Accumulating interest has been called out as a contributor to the student debt crisis. The SAVE plan aims to address that by cutting additional interest charges after you've met your monthly payment. That means if your monthly payment is $0, you won't be charged additional interest. If $50 in interest accumulates on your loans in a month, but your payment is only $30, you won't be charged the additional $20.
F: *In other words...* The SAVE Act will reduce the monthly interest problem by making it so that if you make your monthly payment, you won't have to pay any extra interest on the loan.
C: *This means...* we don't need total debt forgiveness to help people manage their student loans. If people make their payment, then the loan will always be going down and eventually paid off or canceled depending on how long it takes.

3.) Finally...

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Therefore, we were NOT wrong about... forgiveness lacking effectiveness.

PROS & CONS OF STUDENT LOAN FORGIVENESS (REJOINDERS): *Continued…*

REJOINDER-02 (CON): Wasting Resources

They said we were wrong about... wasting resources.

However, we were not wrong because...

1.) First… Wealthiest People Benefit Most
S: According to... the Ways and Means Committee, U.S. Government Website, October 2, 2022
https://waysandmeans.house.gov/study-wealthy-reap-vast-majority-of-benefits-from-bidens-student-loan-giveaway/
Q: *It states...* Top earners benefit the most from Biden's student loan giveaway, despite the Administration's efforts to target low-income borrowers. According to the CFRB, "57 percent to 65 percent of the extended pause and cancellation will go to those in the top half of the income spectrum." Even assuming full participation across incomes, highest earners still reap the most financial reward. As noted by CFRB, in order to receive the handout, Americans must fill out an application, "which is likely to be a more significant barrier to lower income borrowers with fewer resources, particularly those who have long been in default or forbearance and are thus detached from the system."
F: *In other words...* Wealthy people benefit the most from a loan giveaway, despite an intent to target low-income borrowers, up to 65% of the benefits will go to the people in the top 50% of incomes.
C: *This means…* total student loan forgiveness would be even worse giving away more than $1.7 trillion dollars and it will mostly help the people who don't really need it, which is incredibly wasteful.

2.) Also… Costing More Than $3,500 per Taxpayer
S: According to… the House Budget Committee, U.S. Government Website, June 1, 2023
https://budget.house.gov/press-release/bidens-student-loan-bailout-will-cost-average-taxpayer-3526-state-by-state-breakdown
Q: *It States*… The Senate today is set to consider the Republican House-led resolution to reverse President Biden's reckless student loan cancellation plan for the wealthy. Ahead of the Senate vote, the National Taxpayers Union Foundation (NTUF) released new data showing how much Biden's student loan cancellation will cost taxpayers in each state. $3,526. On average, Biden's plan to transfer the cost of student loans from wealthy borrowers to working-class Americans will cost the average taxpayer over $3,500. $3,847. Worse off, this scheme will shift the cost of expensive degrees to Americans who did not attend college – updated figures predict that Biden Administration actions will cost Americans who are 25 years or older without a bachelor's degree $3,847 each. State-by-state examples: In Texas: The average cost per Texan will be $3,456.63. In Pennsylvania: The average cost per Pennsylvanian will be $3,849.03. In Delaware: The average cost per Delawarean will be $3,450.64. In Iowa: The average cost per Iowan will be $3,730.86. The Bottom Line: President Biden's regressive student loan debt bailout is cruelly unfair to the people who couldn't afford to go to college, the taxpayers who will shoulder the burden, and the students who worked their way through school. Republicans will continue to fight to rein-in Biden's reckless spending and reverse this loan giveaway to the wealthy.
F: *In other words*… A 'Partial' forgiveness will cost the average US citizen over $3,500 in taxes making it unfair to the people who didn't go to college, worked their way through college, and to the taxpayers who will end up paying for it.
C: *This means*… A full and total forgiveness would be even worse, creating even higher taxes and greater unfairness to everyone.

3.) Finally...

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Therefore, we were NOT wrong about... wasting valuable resources.