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**BRIEFING**

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## Moderate Senate Democrats Refuse to Commit to Voting for or Against CRA Resolution to Block Federal Student Loan Forgiveness Program

Several news outlets are reporting that moderate Senate Democrats are refusing to voice an opinion on a [resolution of disapproval](#) introduced by Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee Ranking Member Bill Cassidy (R-LA) that would use the Congressional Review Act (CRA) to block the U.S. Department of Education's federal student loan forgiveness plan and end the suspension of federal student loan payments and interest. While Ranking Member Cassidy has the support of 39 Republican Senators for his resolution, enough to bring the legislation to the floor, some moderate Senate Democrats are noncommittal on whether they will vote against the resolution and defend the President's loan forgiveness plan. For example, Sen. Joe Manchin (D-WV) said he had not reviewed the resolution but opposes mass loan forgiveness. "Every student should

have an opportunity to work for the government — whether in the federal, state or local level — to offset their loans,” he said. “But just giving them away, I've never been in favor of.” Sen. Michael Bennet (D-CL), who previously criticized the White House for not targeting the relief program more narrowly, said that he had not looked at the resolution yet. Sen. Catherine Cortez Masto (D-NV) said that she did not have an answer yet on how she plans to vote on the legislation to block the program. During her tight reelection race, Sen. Cortez Masto pushed back against the debt relief plan when it was announced in August.

## National Student Clearinghouse Data Finds Community College Enrollments Showed Uptick In Spring 2023

Today, the National Student Clearinghouse released new [data](#) that provides an update on higher education enrollment trends for Spring 2023. The new data shows that community colleges are seeing signs of recovery after dramatic declines in enrollment over the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the report, enrollment at community colleges in spring 2023 grew by 2.1 percent over the previous year, largely due to increases in freshmen and dual enrollment. While enrollment is still down 1.9 percent from Spring 2021, the Clearinghouse found that enrollment grew among undergraduate students 17 years old and younger — typically students enrolled dually in community college and high school — whose numbers rose by 10.6 percent in Spring 2023 from the previous year.

The report found that, overall, undergraduate enrollment in postsecondary education was steady this Spring (+0.2 percent), with only the public four-year sector experiencing undergraduate enrollment declines. Total enrollment (graduate and undergraduate enrollment combined) has remained unchanged compared to Spring 2022. Enrollment growth continues to be the strongest in certificate programs at both the undergraduate (+5.5 percent) and graduate (+4.6 percent) levels. Associate and bachelor's degree seeking students had more muted enrollment changes (+0.3 percent and -0.6 percent, respectively). Undergraduate men, hit particularly hard at the beginning of the pandemic, are now seeing enrollment growth (+0.7 percent), while the enrollment slide continues for women (-0.9 percent). Latinx students were the only major racial and ethnic group to show enrollment increases (+0.9 percent). “Community colleges have been the hardest hit sector since the start of the pandemic,” National Student Clearinghouse Research Center Doug Shapiro said. “They lost 3.9 percent last spring, and they are currently still down by roughly 14 percent from pre-pandemic levels. There’s still a long way to go, but clearly, this is a nice sign of improvement.” For more coverage, see this article from [Higher](#)

[Ed Dive](#).

## U.S. Department of Education News

For today's Federal Register, click [here](#).

The following announcement was posted to Federal Student Aid's Knowledge Center:

- [Correction: Pell Grants for Prison Education Programs; Determining the Amount of Federal Education Assistance Funds Received by Institutions of Higher Education \(90/10\); Change in Ownership and Change in Control](#)
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## General News

[The Hill](#) reports that President Joe Biden will not veto a Republican-led measure to end the COVID-19 emergency that is slated to be considered by the U.S. Senate shortly. The legislation would terminate the national emergency immediately, as opposed to the current plan to end the designation in mid-May.

[Yahoo](#) reports that there are four states that will pay off a borrower's student loans for moving there.

[Business Insider](#) reports that 453,000 borrowers have qualified under the time-limited waiver for the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program over the last year, according to data released by the U.S. Department of Education.

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