

April 13, 2021

The Honorable John Garamendi
2368 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Garamendi:

On behalf of our 162,000 members, we would like to thank you for sponsoring H.R. 1918, the Student Loan Refinancing and Recalculation Act. This bill would shift federal student loan interest rates downward, delay the point at which interest begins to accrue, and allow loan payments to be deferred until after completion of a medical or dental residency.

Graduate student debt has been rising for decades, even after adjusting for inflation. It has risen to the point that today new dentists with debt are starting their careers owing nearly \$305,000 in educational debt.¹

H.R. 1918 would provide fair and reasonable economic relief to the next generation of health care providers by:

- Provide borrowers a chance to refinance their federal student loans when the interest rate on the 10-year Treasury note is lower.
- Eliminating origination fees and instead set future student loan interest rates at the 10-year Treasury note rate, plus one percent.
- Delaying student loan interest rate accrual for many low- and middle-income borrowers while they are in school.
- Allowing medical and dental residents to defer payments until after completing their residency programs.

This bill will not solve the student debt crisis, but it will help offset the unprecedented financial challenges that these essential health care providers face at graduation. Combined with enhanced public service loan forgiveness, it may also lead more highly indebted young dentists to practice in underserved areas.

We applaud you for sponsoring this meaningful legislation and are pleased to offer our enthusiastic support. If you have any questions, please contact Ms. Megan Mortimer at 202-898-2402 or mortimerm@ada.org. Information is also available at ADA.org/HigherEd.

Sincerely,

/s/

Daniel J. Klemmedson, D.D.S., M.D.
President

/s/

Kathleen T. O'Loughlin, D.M.D., M.P.H.
Executive Director

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¹ Istrate EC, Slapar FJ, et al., Dentists of tomorrow 2020: An analysis of the results of the 2020 ADEA Survey of U.S. Dental School Seniors, J Dent Educ., February 2021; 85: 427-440.