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## **House FY16 Budget Plan Reduces Access to College *Slashes Pell Grants, Eliminates Grants Entirely for Some Students***

“Despite acknowledging that ‘too many young people are graduating with enormous debt,’ the House Budget Committee’s [fiscal year 2016 budget](#) released today slashes funding for [Pell Grants](#), forcing millions of low- and moderate-income students to either borrow more, drop out, or forgo college altogether. Already, *nearly nine out of 10* Pell Grant recipients who graduate from four-year colleges have student loans, and they owe on average *\$4,750 more* than their higher income peers.

“While the President’s [proposed budget](#) fully funds the scheduled increases in the maximum Pell Grant and continues to tie it to inflation after 2017, the House Budget Committee plan freezes the maximum grant for 10 years. This freeze reduces the share of four-year public college costs covered by the maximum grant from an already record low of 29 percent to 20 percent by 2025. The House plan also proposes unspecified reductions in eligibility for Pell Grants, including entirely eliminating some students’ grants.

“Moreover, the House plan appears to eliminate all mandatory funding for Pell Grants, subjecting the program entirely to annual appropriations and making it vulnerable to even deeper cuts. In contrast, TICAS and many others have [recommended](#) that *all* Pell Grant funding be mandatory.

“Despite the House plan’s claim that Pell Grants are on an unsustainable path, Pell Grant costs have actually declined 20 percent since 2010 and are projected to [remain level](#) over the next 10 years, after adjusting for inflation.

“Congress should not balance the federal budget on the backs of students. With higher education more important and harder to afford than ever, we need to do more, not less, to keep college within reach for all students.”

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*An independent, nonprofit organization, The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS) works to make higher education more available and affordable for people of all backgrounds. Our Project on Student Debt works to increase public understanding of rising student debt and the implications for our families, economy, and society. For more information see [www.ticas.org](http://www.ticas.org) and [www.projectonstudentdebt.org](http://www.projectonstudentdebt.org) or follow us on Twitter at [www.twitter.com/TICAS\\_org](http://www.twitter.com/TICAS_org).*