



Media Release

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Student Loan Debt Disproportionally Affects Women

Women hold two-thirds of student debt across the country, according to report by AAUW

MADISON – A [new report](#) by the American Association of University Women (AAUW) reveals that women hold nearly two-thirds of the outstanding student loan debt in the United States. According to the report, women generally take on larger student loans than men and have less disposable income with which to repay their loans due to the gender pay gap.

There are 44 million student loan borrowers in the United States, who hold a combined \$1.3 trillion in outstanding student loans. Over \$800 billion of the total student loan debt is held by women. Wisconsin has the fifth highest rate of graduates with student debt in the country.

“Student debt has become a women’s issue,” said Rep. Katrina Shankland (D-Stevens Point). “This report shows that women are unable to pay their student loans off as quickly as men, causing them to hold their debt longer. While the student loan debt crisis affects everyone, it’s startling to see the disproportionate impact that it’s having on women.”

In the legislature’s Joint Finance Committee meeting yesterday, Democrats introduced a motion to enable student loan borrowers to refinance their loans at lower rates and allow them to receive tax deductions for their loan payments. Committee Republicans rejected the motion, arguing that young people should [learn financial responsibility](#) instead.

“Thousands of hard-working Wisconsinites are drowning in student loan debt, the majority of whom are women,” said Rep. Shankland. “These people are putting off getting married, buying a home, and starting their own business, because they simply can’t afford it. Everyone deserves a chance at the American Dream – we must act now to minimize the burden of student loan debt and empower people to get ahead. The student loan debt crisis can no longer be ignored.”

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