

**General Convention of The Episcopal Church 2022  
Archives' Research Report**

**Resolution No.:** 2022-D048  
**Title:** Supporting Public Investment in Post-High School Education and Training  
**Proposer:** Ms. Laura Russell  
**Topic:** Education

---

---

**Directly Related:** (Attached)

2018-D006 Call for Public Investment and Community Participation in Transition to New Economies

**Indirectly Related:** (Available in the [Acts of Convention](#) database, searchable by resolution number)

None

*In preparing this report, the Archives researched the resolutions in the Acts of Convention database for the period 1973 through 2018, selecting “direct” resolutions that have a substantive bearing on the proposed legislation. The “direct” resolutions are attached and “indirect” resolutions are available in the Acts of Convention database. Committee members who require other research assistance should contact the Archives through the [Research Request Form](#) or call 800-525-9329.*

# D048 - Supporting Public Investment in Post-High School Education and Training

---

**Final Status:** Not Yet Finalized

**Proposed by:** Ms. Laura Russell

**Endorsed by:** Ms. Sarah Lawton, The Rev. Cynthia Black

**Requests New Interim Body:** No

**Amends C&C or Rules of Order:** No

**Has Budget Implications:** No

**Cost:**

**HiA:** HD

**Legislative Committee Currently Assigned:** 08 - Social Justice & United States Policy

**Completion Status:** Incomplete

**Latest House Action:** N/A

**Supporting Documents:** No

---

## Resolution Text

*Resolved*, the House of \_\_\_\_\_ concurring,

That this 80th General Convention acknowledge that family-wage jobs and careers increasingly demand more than a high school education in the 21st century; and be it further

*Resolved*, that The Episcopal Church support moving toward universal free public higher education, including interim steps to expand public investment at federal, state, and local levels in support post-secondary education and training, such as:

- Universally accessible free community, vocational, and technical colleges that provide vocational pathways to skilled jobs and career ladders, including apprenticeship and journeyman programs in the building trades, licensing in the allied health professions, and skills needed to enter growing industries such as the technology sector, as well as articulated pathways to enter bachelor-degree programs at public colleges and universities;
- Increased public investments to support free tuition for all 2-year and 4-year public colleges and universities of higher learning;
- Increased investments in the Pell Grant program to increase eligibility and expand availability for support for non-tuition expenses for low- and middle-income students;

- Increased funding for low-income student programs, such as work-study and paid internships;
- Increased state-level funding for higher education, alongside negotiated agreements or tuition caps to contain the costs of higher education;
- Reevaluation of the expected family contribution formula on the FAFSA to be more realistic of what people can afford, such as in areas with a high cost of living;
- Removal of for-profit colleges and trade schools from eligibility for federal student aid funds, given that sector's poor record in providing pathways to good jobs and the high level of student indebtedness and default in that sector;
- Directed funding for Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Minority Serving Institutions to bring their per-student spending to parity with colleges in their regions;
- General tax-free federal student loan forgiveness on a one-time basis, up to a set amount and phasing out based on income;
- Setting a cap on interest rates for future federal student loans for rates not to exceed 2%;
- Public programs to reduce or waive student loans in return for commitment to public service work, religious or secular, with reasonable applications to apply for and receive those waivers; and be it further

*Resolved*, that The Episcopal Church support legislation that works to lower tuition for all higher education, and contain the costs of higher education and its ancillary expenses.

## **Explanation**

Student loans and the rising cost of higher education has been a topic of discussion for many years now. In the 1980's Pell Grants covered 80% of tuition. Now, they cover less than 5% at some institutions. 20% of student loan debt is held by those over 50 years of age. There are 44 million Americans with student loan debt. And this debt falls heaviest on communities of color, especially African-American women.

Even during college, rising tuition costs keep students struggling. 45% of college students struggle with hunger and 17% experience homelessness. The cost of higher education has increased over 170% in the last forty years. Student loans are not the answer. A four year degree is more expensive than buying a home, and at times, a worse investment. Student loan agencies, many now privatized, have been able to sell loans at exorbitant rates, locking people into 40 year loans that equal mortgages. Plus, with minimal screening, student loan agencies have failed to screen out schools which offer no education to borrowers, instead locking borrowers into payments of an education that did not exist.

No matter where you sit on the loan forgiveness discussion, something must be done. We can no longer afford for college to be a luxury, for public investment to stagnate, and for student loan interest rates to increase. More and more, people need higher education to come out of poverty, homelessness and hunger. We are at an education crisis.

We need to rethink student loans, both past and present. We need to create forgiveness plans for those whose educational institution overpromised and underdelivered. Forgiveness plans so that people can use their income for better purposes, such as living

expenses and reinvestment in the community. Student loan agencies have reaped the benefit of high interest rates and overextending credit.

Community colleges, which used to be near free, have become prohibitive for many. Community colleges allow for first generation college students, those living in poverty and other non-traditional students to obtain the education they so desperately need. By reinvesting in those institutions, we are investing in our communities. By stabilizing the funding for community colleges, we can then work to increase investments in other public colleges and universities, thus allowed the higher education to be more accessible.

Pell grants, work-study and other funding sources used to pay for higher education. Students from low income households could afford college, room and board. They did not have food pantries in colleges, like they do now. These grants have stagnated, or dried up, leaving low income students with no ability to pay for their education and their food or housing.

This resolution seeks to allow the Episcopal Church, through their Office of Government Relations, the ability to advocate for a more just system of higher education for all.

*<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/how-we-rise/2021/01/12/the-for-profit-college-system-is-broken-and-the-biden-administration-needs-to-fix-it/>*





**Resolution Number:** 2018-D006  
**Title:** Call for Public Investment and Community Participation in Transition to New Economies  
**Legislative Action Taken:** Concurred as Amended  
**Final Text:**

*Resolved, That the 79th General Convention of The Episcopal Church urge our members, Office of Government Relations and other agencies, congregations, and dioceses to address the needs and opportunities of local and global economic transition, as such change affects the capacity and dignity of human beings and the welfare of God’s children. As participants in local and global economies, as citizens, and as advocates, The Episcopal Church urges faithfulness to these principles:*

**-Preparing and investing in people so that society as a whole, including workers and local communities, are ready for the economic transition; and be it further**

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church support*

**-Public investment in education and skills necessary to help individuals, families, and communities transition to new industries as some sectors experience contraction while opportunities that require specialized skills grow in other fields; and be it further**

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church support a*

**-Transition to a clean-energy economy that meets goals for climate change mitigation and also includes support for good jobs (i.e., jobs with living wages and benefits that can support a family) in new clean-energy industries as well as strong implementation of new technologies to meet new energy standards, recognizing that carbon-based jobs have often been union jobs; and be it further**

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church support the principle and goal of public funding for*  
**-Universal access to community college programs that are preparing students with skills to meet the workforce needs of the present and future, as well as apprenticeship programs, or similar models, that are well articulated with community college programs, labor unions and other worker organizations, and employer workforce development programs, to provide sustainable wages and educational experience on the job; and be it further**

*Resolved, That The Episcopal Church support*

**-Public policies such as community benefit agreements and local-hire agreements in public works projects and publicly supported industrial development in order to encourage democratic and local control over development and pathways to jobs for underserved local residents;**

**-The rights of workers everywhere to organize, whether in traditional labor unions or new forms of worker organization, in order to have a voice in their workplaces and in sectoral policy development and national industrial policies as technological change continues to create deep and fast changes within the labor market both within the United States and globally.**

**Citation:** General Convention, *Journal of the General Convention of...The Episcopal Church, Austin, 2018* (New York: General Convention, 2018), pp. 694-695.