

*Urges Vermonters to share stories on [www.welch.house.gov/studentdebt](http://www.welch.house.gov/studentdebt)*

With student debt topping one trillion dollars nationwide, Rep. Peter Welch today launched an initiative to compile stories from Vermont students and families about the burden of rising student loan debt.

Meeting with students at the UVM Davis Center, Welch urged them to share their stories on his website at [www.welch.house.gov/studentdebt](http://www.welch.house.gov/studentdebt) . With students facing a July 1 doubling of interest rates for Federal Direct Stafford Student Loans, Welch is working to educate House leaders about the growing crisis of student loan debt and college affordability. In Vermont, nearly 70 percent of college graduates hold an average of \$30,000 in debt.

“A college education is the clearest path to the American middle class,” Welch said. “But increasing tuition costs and mounting student loan debt are hanging a financial albatross around the necks of college students and their parents. Congress must act to block the doubling of student loan interest rates and begin to get a handle on college affordability. Over the next few weeks, I intend to bring the personal stories of struggling Vermonters to the floor of the House of Representatives to highlight the need for a bipartisan solution to college affordability.”

The stories will be compiled on Welch’s website. To see them, [CLICK HERE](#) .