http://newiprogressive.com/images/stories/S5/uwgb-student-s5.jpg 

Governor's Opposition to Student Loan Refinancing Will Increase Brain Drain as Graduates Move to States like Minnesota for Higher Paying Jobs and Lower Interest Rates.

GREEN BAY - Governor Scott Walker visited colleges campuses around Wisconsin this week to announce his College Affordability Legislative Package.

The Governor says the series of bills will build on the current four-year UW-System tuition freeze and focus on making higher education more affordable. However, these measures do not help students who are already struggling to pay their loan debt.



"Unfortunately the Governor is not proposing a serious plan to help the over 815,000 Wisconsin residents who have student loans. This seems to be an attempt at a political solution rather than a real effort to fix the problem," Senator **Dave Hansen** of Green Bay said. "It's as if the Governor and the Republicans looked at the student loan crisis and asked themselves what is the least we can do and still look like we're doing something. And then did even less."

The GOP plan does nothing for the 97% of Wisconsin residents who have student loans. Over 60% of the nearly 1 million Wisconsin residents with federal or private student loans are over the age of 30, the age at which people look to start families, buy new homes and cars.

Unfortunately, the Governor and legislative Republicans have chosen to ignore those 97% in favor of putting forward a political solution they hope will help them in next fall's election.

By playing politics with the student loan crisis they are not only letting Wisconsin fall behind the progress behind made by states like Connecticut, Rhode Island and now Minnesota, they are hurting our economy as well.

The result of their inaction will cost our economy hundreds of millions of dollars annually and will increase the problem of Brain Drain as they push new and recent graduates to states like Minnesota where they can find better paying jobs and lower interest rates on their student loans.

***

Legislative staff writer Jay Wadd contributed to this story.