

Offered by City Councilor Julia Mejia, Arroyo, Baker, Bok, Breadon, , Campbell, Edwards, Essaiabi-George, Flaherty, Flynn, O'Malley and Wu



**CITY OF BOSTON
IN CITY COUNCIL**

**RESOLUTION SUPPORTING H.1339/S.829 AN ACT TO
GUARANTEE DEBT-FREE HIGHER PUBLIC EDUCATION**

- WHEREAS,** Student loan debt is a \$1.7 Trillion national crisis. Since 2003, the number of student debtors has more than doubled to 44 million indebted; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Student debt disproportionately impacts low-income students, students of color, and women, with 84% of Pell Grant students– those coming from the lowest income households– rely on student debt, compared to only 46% of non-Pell students; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Historic barriers to wealth creation and retention drive families of color into debt-reliance for higher education, resulting in nearly 2/3 of Black borrowers owing more than they originally borrowed as early as 12 years after starting college, compared to less than 1/3 of white borrowers; *and*
- WHEREAS,** In Massachusetts in 2017, the average Cost of Attendance at public colleges accounts for an average of only 21% of white household income, but accounts for 38% of Black household income and 43% of Latinx household income, more than double that for white households; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Student debt in Massachusetts is disproportionately a public college problem as public college students graduate with almost equivalent dollars of student debt as private college graduates and more public college students graduate with debt in MA than private college students; *and*
- WHEREAS,** Because of the dramatic decline of public dollars, public colleges and universities have turned to private dollars to finance their budgets as between 2001 and 2016, tuition and fees more than doubled at Massachusetts public college; *and*
- WHEREAS,** While the federal government has the authority to cancel all outstanding debts, state legislatures have the ability to prevent future debts; *and*

WHEREAS,

An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education (H.1339/S.829) by Rep. Higgins and Sen. Eldridge is a systemic solution to the related crises of college unaffordability and student loan debt which will guarantee tuition-and-fees free public college and award additional cost-of-living grant money to low-income families to eliminate the need to borrow for housing, transportation, child care, etc.; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

RESOLVED:

That the Boston City Council offers its support for H.1339/S.829 *An Act to Guarantee Debt-Free Public Higher Education* and that we continue to elevate the voices of students and families living with the burden of student debt.

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