

Massachusetts public education activists call for cancellation of some student debt

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Public education activists, including the Massachusetts Teachers Association, are calling for the cancellation of a substantial amount of student debt to ease the financial crunch brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Group leaders from the MTA and the Fund Our Future Coalition plan a Facebook Live event Wednesday night at 7 p.m. to draw attention to a report written in 2015 by UMass Amherst doctoral candidates Anastasia Wilson that found the state forgoes \$2.5 billion in savings, equity and economic activity due to student debt. The study has been updated to reflect the current conditions brought on by the coronavirus pandemic, and the event will be streamed on the pages of the MTA and the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts.

“The student debt crisis was bubbling over even before the coronavirus crisis, but now as we enter a second Great Depression, we must cancel all student debt and make the economy work for working families,” said Zac Bears, executive director of PHENOM. “Billionaires are getting even richer while students and workers lose their jobs and wait for food in breadlines. We have to do better.”

The coalition said it would like to see Congress pass legislation to cancel up to \$30,000 in student debt for individuals.