

Coburn Amendment _____ - Exempts millionaires from receiving public assistance and ensures the most needy students benefit from the program

The purpose of this amendment is to ensure that the truly needy benefit from this program. This amendment limits the federal assistance provided under this bill to only those students in families that earn less than a million dollars a year.

Congress appropriated \$33 million for the DC Tuition Assistance Program in fiscal year 2007. This amendment would enact a common sense cost control: Limit eligibility to those students with true financial needs.

Every Wealthy Child That Enrolls Reduces The Opportunity For A Lower Income Family

This is a discretionary program and its funding is limited to what is appropriated by Congress. In the event that the amount of funds needed to cover approved applications exceeds the annual appropriation, scholarships will be reduced.

Because there is no financial cut off in eligibility, every child of a wealth family that enrolls reduces the amount a child from a lower income family would be eligible to receive.

This means children of millionaire lobbyists or lawyers who live in the District of Columbia will receive the same amount of public assistance under this program as a child from a poor family in the inner city slums and ghetto.

As of last year, 19 percent of residents of the District of Columbia were living below the poverty line, or about one in five people.

According to the Congressional Research Service (CRS), as of 2004, there were 1,645 individuals in the District of Columbia that have an annual income that exceeds one million dollars annually.

Currently as many as 20 students whose parents have an annual income that exceeds one million dollars are participating in this program, according to the District of Columbia Department of Education.

With so many in the city living in poverty and truly in need, clearly the resources available under this program should be targeted to where the greatest impact to expand access to education can be made.

Limiting public assistance to millionaires is a cost saver that does not require much sacrifice from anyone.