

*** FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE ***

New York University's graduate student workers' union GSOC-UAW Local 2110, in coalition with other graduate student worker unions including GWC-UAW Local 2110 Graduate Workers of Columbia, SENS-UAW Student Employees at The New School, The Graduate Center PSC, and other campus groups, are holding a **Cross-campus Grad Student Rally Against the GOP Tax Bill on Wednesday November 29, 2017, 1:00 pm EST, at Union Square Park**. The rally will highlight the damaging effects the proposed GOP tax bills will have on graduate students and higher education more broadly.

The GOP House bill proposes to eliminate important tax credits for students who pay tuition, deductions for interest on student loans, and, most critically, it proposes to tax the tuition waivers that many graduate students receive as a standard, unconditional part of their funding package (or for their work as teaching assistants, graders, and researchers). The skyrocketing cost of higher education means that graduate students in many cases would be paying three and four times their previous tax rates. This would be prohibitively costly for graduate students who already have meager incomes and work under increasingly precarious conditions. Paying such taxes would simply push many of us below the poverty line and out of the university.

Under this tax regime students from working class backgrounds would be especially hurt and dissuaded from pursuing higher education. And, as people of color, women, single parents, immigrants, LGBTQ people and people with disabilities are disproportionately represented in low-income brackets, the larger effect of the bill would be a dramatic leap backwards in the decades-long push to democratize and diversify higher education.

Gabriel Young, an NYU PhD student, said, "If Congress implements the GOP tax bill as planned, next year I will pay about five times more in taxes than I normally do, my real income will fall by about 25%, and I would likely be forced to leave my doctoral program. This tax bill is a direct attack on vulnerable graduate students who are already grappling with uncertain labor conditions and employment prospects."

We are rallying together to reject this bill and all that it represents. We believe that the university should belong to the whole of society, not only the white and wealthy.

We are demanding that our universities make concrete commitments to ensure that our effective incomes would remain the same if this provision were to pass. Exorbitant tuitions that are charged and then waived by universities are nothing more than a harmful accounting fiction.

We are further calling out our university administrators for their complicity in the continued attack on graduate student working and living conditions. Although our daily labor as teachers, researchers, and clerical workers is necessary to keeping our universities running, we are often not recognized as workers and have faced many years of repugnant union-busting tactics. As we are challenged by new threats from the GOP, our ability to organize and collectively bargain must no longer be denied.

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GSOC-UAW-Local 2110 represents graduate student workers at New York University. We are the first graduate worker union to win recognition and a union contract from a private university in the United States.

<https://makingabetternyu.org>

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