

Congress of the United States  
Washington, DC 20515

## Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Tax Relief Act: H.R. 1596

April 9, 2009

Dear Colleague,

AmeriCorps was created in 1993 as a way to unite local, state and national programs into a network that addresses critical community needs. AmeriCorps members who successfully complete their terms of service receive Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards worth a maximum of \$4,725 a year to help defray the costs of tuition and student loans. Participants can receive no more than two Segal AmeriCorps Education Awards and have up to 7 years after their term of service to claim the award.

*This education award has not increased since the program was created in 1993. During this time, the cost of higher education has more than doubled, outpacing the rate of inflation, increases in family income, and increases in state and federal financial aid. The award has been viewed differently than most other forms of scholarships and fellowships and is subject to federal taxation. The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Tax Relief Act excludes the award from gross income so those who serve can apply the full value of the award toward higher education.*

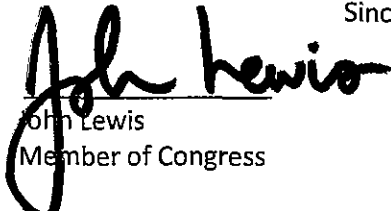
Currently, AmeriCorps members can use their Education Award to:

- Pay educational expenses at qualified institutions of higher education
- Finance educational and vocational training
- Repay qualified student loans

Since its inception, AmeriCorps has encouraged more than 542,000 citizens to volunteer, serve, and address the unmet needs of our Nation. These citizens have given over 705 million hours toward improving the lives of all Americans by strengthening education, responding to disasters, protecting the environment, and supporting public health and safety. The Segal AmeriCorps Education Award should continue to be a valuable and compelling incentive for young people to serve. Now is the time for Congress to act and make this award tax-free.

To become a cosponsor of the Segal AmeriCorps Education Award Tax Relief Act, please contact Jesse Uman with Congressman John Lewis at 5-3801 or Terri Fish with Congressman Charles Boustany at 5-2031.

Sincerely,

  
John Lewis  
Member of Congress

  
Charles Boustany  
Member of Congress