

JON TESTER

Fighting for Montana's Students and Teachers

Jon Tester is a proud product of Montana public schools, a former school board member, and a former public school teacher. He knows firsthand how important education and workforce training are to keep our rural communities strong and maintain our Montana way of life – and he'll never stop fighting for our students, teachers, and parents.

Securing High Speed Internet for Montana's K-12 Schools:

As a lifelong resident of Northcentral Montana, Jon understands that access to the internet is critical for students across Montana to learn and succeed in a 21st century economy. That's why he aggressively pushed the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) to support K-12 students' ability to keep up with their education by ensuring they have access to the internet.

Jon also secured more than \$1.7 million through legislation he helped pass to expand access to high-speed internet, bridge the digital divide, and support students' off-campus learning needs in schools across Montana.

Ensuring Every Student Can Succeed

Jon serves as co-chair of the bipartisan TRiO caucus, which advocates for higher education programs serving disadvantaged students, and he secured more than \$4 million for 14 Montana colleges and universities to increase college retention and graduation rates for Montanans from low-income backgrounds.

Protecting Hunter Education

Teaching hunter safety and shooting sports classes is a Montana tradition. When the Biden administration threatened funding for hunters' education programs in Montana, Jon forced them to reverse course and successfully protected the funding.



"As a proud product of Montana public schools, I know firsthand that public education is the great equalizer for Montana kids, particularly in rural areas. I will never stop fighting to make sure that all Montana students have access to a high-quality, affordable education that will prepare them to succeed in the 21st century economy..."

Jon Tester

JON TESTER FOR U.S. SENATE

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Bringing Down the Cost of Higher Education

Young people should not have to take on crippling debt just to earn a degree, and Jon is fighting to make college more affordable. Since 2021, Jon helped secure a \$900 increase to the maximum federal Pell Grant award, bringing it to \$7,395 per year. He also supported making Pell Grants available year-round.

Jon fought to allow student loan borrowers to refinance their debt, so that college graduates have the same opportunity as everyone else to get control of their finances, boost their credit score, and find lower-interest options for paying off their loans.

Jon Tester led the fight to hold government bureaucrats accountable for the disastrous management of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) and Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness programs, which provide debt relief to Montanans who go into teaching, nursing, law enforcement, or other public service after graduation. Jon also passed legislation to ensure that those working to qualify for PSLF did not face penalties for missing payments because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Jon also introduced legislation to restore FAFSA exemptions for family farmland and small businesses to ensure young Montanans from rural areas receive the aid they need to access higher education.

Investing in Native and Rural Education

Jon is working to address the teacher shortages in Indian Country and rural America. He introduced the *Native Educator Support and Training Act* to recruit and retain more Native educators by providing scholarships, student loan forgiveness, and professional development courses to prospective and current teachers working in Tribal areas.

Similarly, Jon also introduced legislation to get more educators into rural schools by providing resources,



loan forgiveness, and other opportunities to teachers who make the commitment to work in rural schools.

Supporting Student Veterans

As Chairman of the Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee, Jon fights every day for Montana veterans to ensure they can access the educational benefits they have earned. That's why Jon passed bipartisan legislation to increase in-state tuition eligibility for the families of veterans who die from disabilities that are service-related; cut red tape at the Department of Veterans Affairs to ensure more military veterans can use the G.I. Bill to pay for college; and allowed veterans on the GI Bill to continue receiving their full benefits for online learning during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Keeping Schools Open

During the pandemic, Jon repeatedly and successfully passed legislation providing critical, targeted resources for Montana's K-12 schools, colleges, and universities so they could safely support students and reopen to in-person learning as quickly and safely as possible.

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