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Tuition free education?

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Tuition free education ?

To the editor:

Is tuition free education per se profitable? If so, is tuition free education through the college level a good investment? Can the nation afford such a luxury?

If the nation invests \$1,200 a year to educate its students through the elementary and secondary schools, it will invest \$10,800 to educate each student from kindergarten through the eighth grade. Add \$4,800 for high school and the cost is \$15,600. Allow \$12,000 for a college education, or \$100 per academic hour, and the tab is \$27,600. Another \$12,000 for a Ph.D. and the total is \$39,600. Now, the median income, in round figures, for an individual with an eighth grade education or less is \$5,000 a year, a high school diploma \$10,000, a college degree \$15,000, and a Ph.D. \$17,000. These individuals will pay 30 percent of their income in federal, state, and local taxes, such as income, social security, property, sales taxes, etc. They will provide society with \$1,500, \$3,000, \$4,500, and \$5,100 a year respectively. They will have a productive life span of 42 years and donate \$63,000, \$126,000, \$189,000, and \$214,000 in taxes during their productive life span. In every case, society will receive at least a 5-1 ratio on its investment. For every individual that it fails to educate through the college level it will lost at least \$1,500 a year in lost taxes. There are at least 2.5 million individuals in each age group that do

not go to college. 2.5 million multiplied by \$1,500 and society loses \$3.75 billion in lost taxes for each age group. Multiplied by 42 age groups and society loses \$175.5 billion each year in lost taxes.

The most equitable method of financing public education, including higher education, would be to use the principles of social security and sales taxes. In social security, one pays into the fund for 42 years and then is rewarded by checks and Medicare. In tuition free education, one receives one's reward in the beginning and then pays into the fund for the next 42 years. If an individual paid a four percent education tax on the last \$5,000 of his earning, he would pay \$200 a year for his college education, meaning \$8,400 for a \$12,000 education.

If the students at the University, or any high school or college, asked me, "Joe, how could we achieve tuition free education through the college level?" I would tell them to call an organizational meeting and elect officers, and then appoint committees: public relation committee, correspondence committee, committees to get signatures on petitions that they would send to their representatives in Washington requesting tuition free education through the college level.

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