



# AAG

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION  
*of* GEOGRAPHERS

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## **Senate Bill Omits Taxation of Graduate Student Tuition Waivers; Next Steps Uncertain**

On December 2, 2017, the U.S. Senate passed its version of tax reform legislation. As we [shared with you recently](#), the House also passed a tax bill in mid-November.

A provision in the House version that would count tuition waivers as taxable income is of significant concern to graduate students and academic departments. The Senate bill does not contain this language. Given this and other substantial differences between the two bills, there are three likely scenarios in Congress:

- The two houses could deadlock and fail to come to an agreement, which would result in tax reform not being enacted.
- The House could simply pass the Senate bill, which could then be signed into law without further action by Senators.
- A conference committee could develop a compromise bill that would pass both houses and be signed into law.

The first and second scenarios would preclude the taxation of tuition waivers from becoming law. The third scenario would open the door to a final bill including the tuition waiver provision. Fortunately, the AAG and dozens of prominent media outlets, organizations, and universities have been outspoken in their opposition to the provision in recent weeks. Nonetheless, we will continue to monitor the issue closely.

As we noted a few weeks ago, we urge AAG members and friends to reach out to your elected officials to express your own views on issues of importance to you.