

## Speaker denounces federal student aid

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Neal McCluskey knows his reasoning seems counter-intuitive, but the associate director of the Cato Institute's Center for Educational Freedom said the way to reduce the price of a college degree is to get rid of federal aid.

McCluskey's Tuesday night talk was the second event of TRUTH week — a four-day event organized by the Penn State College Republicans which features conservative speakers.

A self-described libertarian, McCluskey focused on the reasons why the cost of higher education has grown. The biggest cause, he said, is that increases in student aid only serve to convince universities to raise tuition as well.

“Students wouldn't be priced out of college if aid wasn't already priced in,” he said.

In addition, he said that taxpayers unfairly picked up the cost of funding increases.

“College is meant to increase your earnings,” he said. “Why should other people pay for your opportunity to make more money?”

The talk came on the heels of President Obama's plan to ease the burden of student debt, as well as Occupy Penn State's ongoing protest in the HUB-Robeson Center against the cost of higher education.

Josh Crawford, Chairman of the College Republicans, said he was glad that McCluskey's subject connected to current events so well.

“There's a lot of relevance to what's going on lately,” Crawford (senior-political science) said.

McCluskey spoke in front of about 50 people, and took questions after he finished.

Zach Winston (senior-economics) said he agreed with the ideas McCluskey presented, but was glad to see him admit when he didn't have the data to back up his assertions.

“I appreciate that he said when he wasn’t certain,” Winston said. “It was good how balanced it was.”

TRUTH week continues at 8 p.m. today in 102 Thomas Building, with a talk about the Great Depression given by Lawrence Reed, the President of the Foundation for Economic Education.