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**BAUCUS CALLS FOR TAX REFORM TO WIDEN ACCESS TO EDUCATION, AIM  
ASSISTANCE AT THOSE WITH FEWEST OPPORTUNITIES**

*Finance Chair: Tax Reform Can Increase Educational Opportunities, Boost Growth and Make  
America More Competitive*

**Washington, DC** – Senate Finance Committee Chairman Max Baucus (D-Mont.) today called for tax reform to increase access to education and make it easier for students and families to claim the assistance for which they qualify. Baucus’s call follows his release of a [GAO report](#) that found 1.5 million eligible tax filers had not claimed an education credit or deduction for which they were eligible, costing them hundreds of dollars each on average. In addition, 237,000 filers claimed a credit or deduction that did not maximize their tax benefit. According to GAO, many tax filers fail to realize their full tax benefit because of the complexity of the tax code.

**“Promoting education through tax reform and making sure the assistance gets to those in need will pay dividends for the country,”** Baucus said. **“Tax reform can widen access to education, boost growth and make America more competitive.”**

Currently, the US tax code has eight higher education tax benefits. The sheer number of credits and deductions, the similarities between them, and the differences in the reporting and eligibility requirements create a level of complexity that can prevent families and students from maximizing their potential tax benefit. The deductions and credits tax filers claimed also varied widely across economic groups.

Baucus [addressed education](#) in a [speech on tax reform he delivered last week](#), saying tax reform needs to widen opportunity and refocus education tax benefits to give help to those in need.

View the full report on the GAO website here: <http://www.gao.gov/products/GAO-12-560>

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