



PHILADELPHIA

FEDERATION of TEACHERS

Jerry Jordan
Remarks at Student Debt Clinic
September 15, 2022

Good afternoon— and it is a good afternoon, because we are here to celebrate something really exciting— and to offer resources to our members so that they can continue to benefit from what really has been the culmination of years of advocacy by the AFT. We're joined by some very special guests today. **AFTPA President Arthur Steinberg, along with our inimitable Philadelphia Council AFL President Pat Eiding** & I are thrilled to welcome you to Philadelphia.

Second Gentleman Emhoff, Secretary Cardona—welcome to our beautiful city! And of course **Randi**, welcome to your second home.

You will hear from our guests today about what the impact of the student debt crisis is, and what collectively, we have done to help make major shifts in how it is addressed. I am thrilled that we are joined by two members who will tell their stories. **You'll hear from Trina Dean and Heather Levi shortly.**

Going into the laudable career of public education should not be a lifelong commitment to carrying debt. Educators work tirelessly every single day amidst roadblocks set by those who really have no actual knowledge about what it takes to be an effective educator.

Despite this, our educators are profoundly dedicated to the students they serve. But predatory lending institutions have, for years, sought to make a buck (well actually many bucks) from our teachers.

Recognizing this crisis, the AFT has led the charge in fighting for real change. Randi, under your leadership, this has been a priority at AFT. And it's made a difference.

You know what else has made a difference? A certain election. And in that election, not only did we remove a certain someone, but we elected **Joe Biden** and **Kamala Harris**, leaders who have promised to be guided by their commitment to working people. And, it does not hurt that the President is married to a teacher!

We are joined today by **Secretary of Education Cardona** and **Second Gentleman Emhoff** who are part of that incredible work each day. You will hear more shortly about these distinguished guests, and our phenomenal members.

But for now, I want everyone to remember this: elections matter. Advocacy matters. It's great to be here with you all today.

And now, I am so pleased to introduce Trina Dean. Trina is an academic coach and the Associate Secretary for the PFT as well as the Associate Secretary on AFTPA executive council.