

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 9853

To establish a grant program to support students, families, and school personnel impacted by immigration enforcement actions to ensure that schools remain safe, trauma-informed learning environments, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 22, 2026

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois (for himself, Mr. CORREA, Ms. BONAMICI, Ms. OMAR, Ms. NORTON, Mr. GARCIA of California, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Ms. CROCKETT, Mrs. RAMIREZ, Ms. CRAIG, Ms. LEE of Pennsylvania, Mr. EVANS of Pennsylvania, Mrs. GRIJALVA, and Mr. ESPAILLAT) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

A BILL

To establish a grant program to support students, families, and school personnel impacted by immigration enforcement actions to ensure that schools remain safe, trauma-informed learning environments, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may cited as the “Right to Learn Act of
5 2026”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

2 In this Act:

3 (1) COMMUNITY-BASED NONPROFIT ORGANIZA-
4 TION.—The term “community-based nonprofit orga-
5 nization” means a nonprofit entity that—

6 (A) demonstrates expertise in trauma-in-
7 formed care, educational equity, or immigrant
8 family services; and

9 (B) is described in section 501(c)(3) of the
10 Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and is exempt
11 from taxation under section 501(a) of such
12 Code.

13 (2) CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE CARE.—The
14 term “culturally responsive care” means practices,
15 policies, or interventions that—

16 (A) recognize and affirm students’ cul-
17 tural, linguistic, and community backgrounds;

18 (B) ensure that educational and mental
19 health services are inclusive, equitable, and ac-
20 cessible to individuals of all racial, ethnic, and
21 national origins; and

22 (C) integrate students’ and families’ cul-
23 tural strengths and perspectives into trauma-in-
24 formed and educational support programs.

25 (3) EARLY CHILDHOOD PROGRAM.—The term
26 “early childhood program” means a Head Start or

1 Early Head Start program carried out under the
2 Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), or a pre-
3 kindergarten program that is licensed or regulated
4 by a State and that receives Federal or State funds.

5 (4) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
6 ty” means—

7 (A) a local educational agency;

8 (B) a public school;

9 (C) an early childhood program;

10 (D) an institution of higher education;

11 (E) a community-based nonprofit organiza-
12 tion; or

13 (F) a legal service provider.

14 (5) IMMIGRATION ENFORCEMENT ACTION.—The
15 term “immigration enforcement action” means any
16 action carried out by or on behalf of the Department
17 of Homeland Security for the purpose of enforcing
18 the immigration laws (as such term is defined in sec-
19 tion 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8
20 U.S.C. 1101)).

21 (6) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
22 term “institution of higher education” has the
23 meaning given the term in section 101 of the Higher
24 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001).

1 (7) KNOW YOUR RIGHTS SERVICES.—The term
2 “Know Your Rights services” means services that
3 provide accurate, age-appropriate, and culturally and
4 linguistically responsive information to students,
5 families, educators, and school personnel regarding
6 legal rights and available protections under Federal,
7 State, and local law, including with respect to inter-
8 actions with immigration enforcement, access to edu-
9 cation and related services, due process rights, and
10 protections against discrimination and unlawful
11 search or questioning.

12 (8) LEGAL SERVICE PROVIDER.—The term
13 “legal service provider” means a nonprofit legal
14 services organization, legal aid organization, law
15 school legal clinic, or pro bono legal network that
16 provides representation, referral, or Know Your
17 Rights services to immigrant children and families.

18 (9) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term
19 “local educational agency” has the meaning given
20 the term in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
21 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

22 (10) SCHOOL PERSONNEL.—The term “school
23 personnel” means teachers, principals, administra-
24 tors, school counselors, social workers, school psy-
25 chologists, nurses, paraprofessionals, transportation

1 staff, food service workers, custodial staff, security
2 personnel, and any other individuals employed by,
3 under contract with, or volunteering on behalf of an
4 eligible entity described in subparagraphs (A)
5 though (D) of paragraph (4).

6 (11) SPECIFIED INDIVIDUAL.—The term “spec-
7 ified individual” means an individual—

8 (A) who is not a United States national
9 and who is present in the United States with or
10 without lawful status under the immigration
11 laws (as such term is defined in section 101 of
12 the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C.
13 1101)); or

14 (B) who has a household member who is
15 not a United States national and who is present
16 in the United States with or without lawful sta-
17 tus under the immigration laws (as such term
18 is defined in section 101 of the Immigration
19 and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101)).

20 (12) TRAUMA-INFORMED PRACTICE.—The term
21 “trauma-informed practice”, when used with respect
22 to an approach to immigration enforcement action,
23 means an approach in education or social services
24 that recognizes and addresses the impact of trau-
25 matic stress on students, families, and staff, includ-

1 ing through principles of safety, trust, empower-
2 ment, peer support, choice, and cultural responsive-
3 ness.

4 **SEC. 3. PURPOSE.**

5 The purposes of this Act are to—

6 (1) provide emergency resources to eligible enti-
7 ties to support students and educators impacted by
8 immigration enforcement actions;

9 (2) ensure that schools remain safe, trauma-in-
10 formed environments for learning, especially for stu-
11 dents who are specified individuals;

12 (3) affirm and reinforce the constitutional right
13 to free, public education for all children, regardless
14 of immigration status, as recognized in *Plyler v.*
15 *Doe*, (457 U.S. 202 (1982)), and to prohibit dis-
16 criminatory measures based on immigration status;

17 (4) reduce absenteeism, disengagement, bul-
18 lying, and academic decline resulting from immigra-
19 tion enforcement action-related trauma and insta-
20 bility; and

21 (5) support educators and staff in effectively re-
22 sponding to the needs of students who are specified
23 individuals and their families.

1 **SEC. 4. GRANT PROGRAM ESTABLISHES.**

2 (a) **AUTHORITY.**—The Secretary of Education shall
3 establish a competitive grant program to award funds to
4 eligible entities for the purposes described in subsection
5 (c).

6 (b) **PERIOD OF GRANTS.**—Grants awarded under this
7 Act shall be for a initial period not to exceed 3 years, but
8 may be renewed annually as determined appropriate by
9 the Secretary of Education based on performance and
10 evaluation.

11 (c) **USE OF FUNDS.**—An eligible entity receiving a
12 grant under this Act may use grant funds for the following
13 purposes:

14 (1) Student-focused stabilization services for
15 students impacted by immigration enforcement ac-
16 tions, including—

17 (A) hiring or expanding access to bilingual
18 counselors, social workers, trauma-informed
19 staff, or school psychologists;

20 (B) providing emergency assistance, in-
21 cluding transportation, food, clothing, tem-
22 porary shelter, or legal service navigation (in-
23 cluding referral to legal service providers, part-
24 nerships with legal service providers, and pay-
25 ment of administrative or court fees related to
26 immigration proceedings);

1 (C) supporting in-school mental health
2 services, community-based mental health pro-
3 viders, peer support groups, family-based coun-
4 seling or therapeutic services, and safe and sup-
5 porting school environments for students experi-
6 encing anxiety, fear, or trauma stemming from
7 immigration enforcement actions; and

8 (D) developing and delivering curriculum
9 or instructional content concerning the history,
10 contributions, and experiences of immigrants in
11 the United States to foster inclusion and cul-
12 tural awareness.

13 (2) School personnel-focused services and train-
14 ing, including—

15 (A) providing mental health services, peer-
16 support networks, or counseling to school per-
17 sonnel impacted by immigration enforcement
18 actions (including school personnel who are
19 specified individuals); and

20 (B) professional development and training
21 on—

22 (i) trauma-informed practices with re-
23 spect to immigration enforcement actions;

24 (ii) legal rights of immigrant students
25 and families; and

1 (iii) culturally responsive care and im-
2 migration-related crisis response protocols.

3 (3) Community collaboration and family en-
4 gagement with respect to immigration enforcement
5 actions, including—

6 (A) partnering with legal service providers,
7 community-based nonprofit organizations, or
8 family advocacy centers to provide Know Your
9 Rights services, family reunification resources,
10 and deportation defense or legal support;

11 (B) coordinating with local governments,
12 local educational agencies, and community
13 stakeholders to develop or revise protocols for
14 school responses during immigration enforce-
15 ment actions;

16 (d) SELECTION CRITERIA; PRIORITIES.—In awarding
17 grants under this Act, the Secretary of Education shall
18 determine appropriate selection criteria, and shall give pri-
19 ority to an eligible entity that meets one or more of the
20 following criteria:

21 (1) Serves a local educational agency or student
22 population that is located in a community with im-
23 migration enforcement action.

24 (2) Serves populations with high rates of speci-
25 fied individuals.

1 (3) Has established partnerships with commu-
2 nity-based nonprofit organizations or legal service
3 providers.

4 (e) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE, OVERSIGHT, AND
5 EVALUATION.—The Secretary of Education may reserve
6 up to 5 percent of funds made available to carry out this
7 Act for evaluation, oversight, monitoring, and technical as-
8 sistance to grantees.

9 **SEC. 5. PROTECTIONS AND NONDISCRIMINATION.**

10 (a) COLLECTION, USE, AND TREATMENT OF
11 DATA.—

12 (1) PROHIBITION ON STATUS INQUIRY OR DIS-
13 CLOSURE.—In carrying out this Act, the Secretary
14 of Education or an eligible entity receiving funds
15 under this Act may not request, collect, or disclose
16 personally identifiable information concerning the
17 immigration or citizenship status of any student or
18 family member, except where such disclosure is ex-
19 pressly required by a Federal law other than this
20 Act that relates to the collection or disclosure of im-
21 migration or citizenship information for the adminis-
22 tration of a Federal program or investigation, or by
23 a judicial order issued under such a law.

24 (2) DATA TO ADMINISTER GRANT.—To admin-
25 ister and carry out the grant program under this

1 Act, the Secretary of Education and any eligible en-
2 tity receiving funds under this Act may use non-per-
3 sonally identifiable information from Federal, State,
4 or local governments or local educational agencies to
5 determine, within a community to be served by a
6 grant under this Act, the occurrence of immigration
7 enforcement action and the population of specified
8 individuals.

9 (b) NONDISCRIMINATION.—No eligible entity may
10 deny or limit services or supports provided under this Act
11 on the basis of actual or perceived immigration status of
12 a student, family member, or school personnel who is im-
13 pacted by immigration enforcement action.

14 (c) COMPLIANCE.—Each eligible entity applying for
15 a grant under this Act shall certify compliance with appli-
16 cable Federal privacy and civil rights laws, as determined
17 by the Secretary of Education, including the Family Edu-
18 cational Rights and Privacy Act (20 U.S.C. 1232g) and
19 title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d
20 et seq.).

21 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

22 There are authorized to be appropriated to carry out
23 this Act \$250,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2027
24 through 2031.

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