

STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY IN HIGHER
EDUCATION ACT

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JULY 17, 2014.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of
the Union and ordered to be printed
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Mr. KLINE, from the Committee on Education and the Workforce,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 4983]

[Including cost estimate of the Congressional Budget Office]

The Committee on Education and the Workforce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 4983) to simplify and streamline the information regarding institutions of higher education made publicly available by the Secretary of Education, and for other purposes, having considered the same, report favorably thereon with an amendment and recommend that the bill as amended do pass.

The amendment is as follows:

Strike all after the enacting clause and insert the following:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act”.

SEC. 2. COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.

(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-time,”;

(B) in paragraph (3) in the matter preceding subparagraph (A), by striking “first-time,”; and

(C) in paragraph (4), by striking “first-time,”;

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1), by striking “first-time”; and

(B) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-time”;

(3) by striking subsections (c) through (g), (j), and (l);

(4) by redesignating subsections (h), (i), and (k) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

(5) by striking subsection (d) (as so redesignated) and inserting the following new subsection:

“(d) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall develop and make publicly available a website to be known as the ‘College Dashboard website’ in accordance with this section and prominently display on such website, in simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data are available, the following information with respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV:

“(A) A link to the website of the institution.

“(B) An identification of the type of institution as one of the following:

“(i) A four-year public institution of higher education.

“(ii) A four-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.

“(iii) A four-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.

“(iv) A two-year public institution of higher education.

“(v) A two-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.

“(vi) A two-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.

“(vii) A less than two-year public institution of higher education.

“(viii) A less than two-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.

“(ix) A less than two-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.

“(C) The number of students enrolled at the institution—

“(i) as undergraduate students; and

“(ii) as graduate students, if applicable.

“(D) The student-faculty ratio.

“(E) The percentage of degree-seeking or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who obtain a degree or certificate within—

“(i) 100 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled;

“(ii) 150 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled; and

“(iii) 200 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled.

“(F) The average net price per year for undergraduate students and a link to the net price calculator for such institution.

“(G) The average Federal student loan debt incurred by an undergraduate student who has obtained a certificate or degree from the institution and who borrowed Federal student loans in the course of obtaining such certificate or degree.

“(H) A link to national and regional data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on starting salaries in all major occupations.

“(I) A link to the webpage of the institution containing campus safety data with respect to such institution.

“(2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall publish on Internet webpages that are linked to through the College Dashboard website for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data is available the following information with respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV:

“(A) ENROLLMENT.—

“(i) The percentages of male and female undergraduate students enrolled at the institution.

“(ii) The percentages of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution—

“(I) full-time; and

“(II) less than full-time.

“(iii) Of the undergraduate students enrolled at the institution—

“(I) the percentage of such students who are from the State in which the institution is located;

“(II) the percentage of such students who are from other States; and

“(III) the percentage of such students who are international students.

“(iv) The percentages of students enrolled at the institution, disaggregated by—

- “(I) race and ethnic background;
- “(II) classification as a student with a disability;
- “(III) recipients of a Federal Pell Grant;
- “(IV) recipients of veterans’ education benefits (as defined in section 480); and
- “(V) recipients of a Federal student loan.

“(B) COMPLETION.—The information required under paragraph (1)(E), disaggregated by—

- “(i) recipients of a Federal Pell Grant;
- “(ii) recipients of a loan made under part D (other than a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan) who did not receive a Federal Pell Grant;
- “(iii) persons who did not receive a Federal Pell Grant or a loan made under part D (other than a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan);
- “(iv) race and ethnic background; and
- “(v) classification as a student with a disability.

“(C) COSTS.—

- “(i) The cost of attendance for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live on campus.
- “(ii) The cost of attendance for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live off campus.
- “(iii) The cost of tuition and fees for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution.
- “(iv) The cost of tuition and fees per credit hour or credit hour equivalency for undergraduate students enrolled in the institution less than full time.
- “(v) In the case of a public institution of higher education and notwithstanding subsection (b)(1), the costs described in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

- “(I) full-time students enrolled in the institution who are residents of the State in which the institution is located; and
- “(II) full-time students enrolled in the institution who are not residents of such State.

“(vi) The net price for students receiving Federal student financial aid under title IV, disaggregated by the following income categories for such students:

- “(I) \$0 to \$30,000.
- “(II) \$30,001 to \$48,000.
- “(III) \$48,001 to \$75,000.
- “(IV) \$75,001 to \$110,000.
- “(V) Over \$110,000.

“(D) FINANCIAL AID.—

- “(i) The average annual grant amount (including Federal, State, and institutional aid) awarded to an undergraduate student enrolled at the institution who receives financial aid.
- “(ii) The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution receiving Federal, State, and institutional grants, student loans, and any other type of student financial assistance known by the institution, provided publicly or through the institution, such as Federal work-study funds.
- “(iii) The cohort default rate (as defined in section 435(m)) for such institution.

“(E) FACULTY INFORMATION.—

- “(i) The ratio of the number of course sections taught by part-time instructors to the number of course sections taught by full-time faculty, disaggregated by course sections intended primarily for undergraduate students and course sections intended primarily for graduate students.
- “(ii) The mean and median years of employment for part-time instructors.

“(3) OTHER DATA MATTERS.—

“(A) COMPLETION DATA.—The Commissioner of Education Statistics shall ensure that the information required under paragraph (1)(E) includes information with respect to all students at an institution, including students other than first-time, full-time students, in a manner that the Commissioner considers appropriate.

“(B) ADJUSTMENT OF INCOME CATEGORIES.—The Secretary may annually adjust the range of each of the income categories described in paragraph (2)(C)(vi) to account for a change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban

Consumers as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics if the Secretary determines an adjustment is necessary.

“(4) INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISON.—The Secretary shall include on the College Dashboard website a method for users to easily compare the information required under paragraphs (1) and (2) between institutions.

“(5) UPDATES.—

“(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update the College Dashboard website not less than annually.

“(B) TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.—The Secretary shall regularly assess the format and technology of the College Dashboard website and make any changes or updates that the Secretary considers appropriate.

“(6) CONSUMER TESTING.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—In developing and maintaining the College Dashboard website, the Secretary, in consultation with appropriate departments and agencies of the Federal Government, shall conduct consumer testing with appropriate persons, including current and prospective college students, family members of such students, institutions of higher education, and experts, to ensure that the College Dashboard website is usable and easily understandable and provides useful and relevant information to students and families.

“(B) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES.—The Secretary shall submit to the authorizing committees any recommendations that the Secretary considers appropriate for changing the information required to be provided on the College Dashboard website under paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the results of the consumer testing conducted under subparagraph (A).

“(7) PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE LINKS TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AFTER SUBMISSION OF FAFSA.—The Secretary shall provide to each student that submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 a link to the webpage of the College Dashboard website that contains the information required under paragraph (1) for each institution of higher education such student includes on such Application.

“(8) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Secretary, in consultation with each appropriate head of a department or agency of the Federal Government, shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable that any information related to higher education that is published by such department or agency is consistent with the information published on the College Dashboard website.

“(9) REFERENCES TO COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE.—Any reference in this Act to the College Navigator website shall be considered a reference to the College Dashboard website.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), as amended by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended—

(1) in section 131(h)(1) (20 U.S.C. 1015(h)(1)), by striking “College Navigator” and inserting “College Dashboard”; and

(2) in section 132(a) (20 U.S.C. 1015a(a)), by striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following new paragraph:

“(1) COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.—The term ‘College Dashboard website’ means the College Dashboard website required under subsection (d).”.

(c) DEVELOPMENT.—The Secretary of Education shall develop and publish the College Dashboard website required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as amended by subsections (a) and (b) of this section, not later than one year after the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary shall maintain the College Navigator website required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as in effect the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, in the manner required under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as in effect on such day, until the College Dashboard website referred to in subsection (c) is complete and publicly available on the Internet.

SEC. 3. NET PRICE CALCULATORS.

Subsection (c) of section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as redesignated by section 2(a)(4) of this Act, is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as paragraph (6); and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following new paragraphs:

“(4) MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NET PRICE CALCULATORS.—Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act, a net price calculator for an institution of higher education shall meet the following requirements:

“(A) The link for the calculator shall—

- “(i) be clearly labeled as a net price calculator and prominently, clearly, and conspicuously posted in locations on the website of such institution where information on costs and aid is provided and any other location that the institution considers appropriate; and
- “(ii) match in size and font to the other prominent links on the webpage where the link for the calculator is displayed.
- “(B) The webpage displaying the results for the calculator shall specify at least the following information:
- “(i) The net price (as calculated under subsection (a)(2)) for such institution, which shall be the most visually prominent figure on the results screen.
- “(ii) Cost of attendance, including—
- “(I) tuition and fees;
- “(II) average annual cost of room and board for the institution for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution;
- “(III) average annual cost of books and supplies for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution; and
- “(IV) estimated cost of other expenses (including personal expenses and transportation) for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution.
- “(iii) Estimated total need-based grant aid and merit-based grant aid from Federal, State, and institutional sources that may be available to a full-time undergraduate student.
- “(iv) Percentage of the full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution that received any type of grant aid described in clause (iii).
- “(v) The disclaimer described in paragraph (6).
- “(vi) In the case of a calculator that—
- “(I) includes questions to estimate the eligibility of a student or prospective student for veterans’ education benefits (as defined in section 480) or educational benefits for active duty service members, such benefits are displayed on the results screen in a manner that clearly distinguishes such benefits from the grant aid described in clause (iii); or
- “(II) does not include questions to estimate eligibility for the benefits described in subclause (I), the results screen indicates that certain students (or prospective students) may qualify for such benefits and includes a link to information about such benefits.
- “(C) The institution shall populate the calculator with data from not later than 2 academic years prior to the most recent academic year.
- “(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF DATA COLLECTED BY THE NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—A net price calculator for an institution of higher education shall—
- “(A) clearly indicate which questions are required to be completed for an estimate of the net price from the calculator;
- “(B) in the case of a calculator that requests contact information from users, clearly mark such requests as optional and provide for an estimate of the net price from the calculator without requiring users to enter such information; and
- “(C) prohibit any personally identifiable information provided by users from being sold or made available to third parties.”.

SEC. 4. FUNDING.

(a) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated to the Department of Education to maintain the College Navigator website, \$1,000,000 shall be available to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(b) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No funds are authorized by this Act to be appropriated to carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

H.R. 4983, THE STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACT

PURPOSE

H.R. 4983, the *Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act*, streamlines and improves the information made available by the secretary of education about institutions of higher education in order to help students and families make more informed decisions about postsecondary education options.

COMMITTEE ACTION

As the Committee on Education and the Workforce begins the *Higher Education Act* reauthorization process, increasing transparency and usefulness of higher education data; simplifying and improving the federal student aid programs; and promoting innovation, access, and completion remain top priorities.

112TH CONGRESS

Hearings—First session

On March 1, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Education Regulations: Weighing the Burden on Schools and Students.” The hearing was the first in a series examining the burden of federal, state, and local regulations on the nation’s education system. The purpose of the hearing was to uncover the damaging effects of federal regulations on schools and institutions. These rules increasingly stifle growth and innovation, raise operating costs, and limit student access to affordable colleges and universities throughout the nation. Testifying before the committee were Dr. Edgar Hatrick, Superintendent, Loudon County Public Schools, Ashburn, Virginia; Ms. Kati Haycock, President, The Education Trust, Washington, D.C.; Mr. Gene Wilhoit, Executive Director, Council of Chief State School Officers, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Christopher B. Nelson, President, St. John’s College, Annapolis, Maryland.

On March 11, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Education Regulations: Federal Overreach into Academic Affairs.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the most egregious and intrusive pieces of the program integrity regulations issued by the U.S. Department of Education, specifically, the state authorization regulation and the credit hour regulation, and to uncover the unintended consequences of the regulations to states and institutions of higher education. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. John Ebersole, President, Excelsior College, Albany, New York; Dr. G. Blair Dowden, President, Huntington University, Huntington, Indiana; The Honorable Kathleen Tighe, Inspector General, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Ralph Wolff, President, Western Association of Schools and Colleges, Alameda, California.

On March 17, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Education Regulations: Roadblocks to Student Choice in Higher Education.” The purpose of the hearing was to explore the harmful consequences of the gainful employment regulation issued by the U.S. Department of Education. Testifying before the committee were Ms. Catherine Barreto, Graduate, Monroe College, and Senior Sales Associate, Doubletree Hotels, Brooklyn, New York; Mr. Travis Jennings, Electrical Supervisor of the Manufacturing Launch Systems Group, Orbital Sciences Corporation, Chandler, Arizona; Dr. Arnold Mitchem, President, Council for Opportunity in Education, Washington, D.C.; and Ms. Jeanne Herrmann, Chief Operating Officer, Globe University/Minnesota School of Business, Woodbury, Minnesota.

On March 21, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, on “Reviving

our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight work by local colleges and universities to respond to local and state economic needs. Testifying before the committee were Mr. James Perry, President, Hazelton City Council, Hazelton, Pennsylvania; Mr. Jeffrey Aleson, Vice President of Strategic Planning and Quality Assurance, Diamond Manufacturing, Exeter, Pennsylvania; Dr. Reynold Verret, Provost, Wilkes University, Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania; Mr. Raymond Angeli, President, Lackawanna College, Scranton, Pennsylvania; Ms. Joan Seaman, Executive Director, Empire Beauty School, Moosic, Pennsylvania; and Mr. Thomas P. Leary, President, Luzerne County Community College, Nanticoke, Pennsylvania.

On March 22, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Utica, New York, on “Reviving our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight work by local colleges and universities to respond to local and state economic needs. Testifying before the committee were Mr. Anthony J. Picente, Jr., County Executive, Oneida County, Utica, New York; Mr. Dave Mathis, Director, Oneida County Workforce Development, Utica, New York; Dr. John Bay, Vice President and Chief Scientist, Assured Information Security, Inc., Rome, New York; Dr. Bjong Wolf Yeigh, President, State University of New York Institute of Technology, Utica, New York; Dr. Ann Marie Murray, President, Herkimer County Community College, Herkimer, New York; Dr. Judith Kirkpatrick, Provost, Utica College, Utica, New York; and Mr. Phil Williams, President, Utica School of Commerce, The Business College, Utica, New York.

On April 21, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Columbia, Tennessee, on “Reviving our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight the work by local colleges and universities to respond to local and state economic needs. Testifying before the committee were Dr. Janet Smith, President, Columbia State Community College, Columbia, Tennessee; Dr. Ted Brown, President, Martin-Methodist College, Pulaski, Tennessee; Mr. Jim Coakley, President, Nashville Auto-Diesel College, Nashville, Tennessee; The Honorable Dean Dickey, Mayor, City of Columbia, Tennessee; Ms. Susan Marlow, President and Chief Executive Officer, Smart Data Strategies, Franklin, Tennessee; Ms. Jan McKeel, Executive Director, South Central Tennessee Workforce Board, Columbia, Tennessee; and Ms. Margaret Prater, Executive Director, Northwest Tennessee Workforce Board, Dyersburg, Tennessee.

On July 8, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training, together with the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Regulatory Affairs, Stimulus Oversight, and Government Spending, held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “The Gainful Employment Regulation: Limiting Job Growth and Student Choice.” The purpose of the hearing was to explore the harmful consequences of the gainful employment regulation issued by the U.S. Department of Education. Testifying before the subcommittees were Dr. Dario A. Cortes, President, Berkeley College,

New York City, New York; Dr. Anthony P. Carnevale, Director, Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Karla Carpenter, Graduate, Herzing University and Program Manager, Quest Software, Madison, Wisconsin; and Mr. Harry C. Alford, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Black Chamber of Commerce, Washington, D.C.

On August 16, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Greenville, South Carolina, on “Reviving Our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight the work by local colleges and universities to respond to local and state economic needs. Testifying before the subcommittee were The Honorable Knox White, Mayor, City of Greenville, South Carolina; Mr. Werner Eikenbusch, Section Manager, Associate Development and Training, BMW Manufacturing Co., Spartanburg, South Carolina; Ms. Laura Harmon, Project Director, Greenville Works, Greenville, South Carolina; Dr. Brenda Thames, Vice President of Academic Development, Greenville Health System, Greenville, South Carolina; Mr. James F. Barker, President, Clemson University, Clemson, South Carolina; Dr. Thomas F. Moore, Chancellor, University of South Carolina Upstate, Spartanburg, South Carolina; Dr. Keith Miller, President, Greenville Technical College, Greenville, South Carolina; and Ms. Amy Hickman, Campus President, ECPI College of Technology, Greenville, South Carolina.

On October 25, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Government-Run Student Loans: Ensuring the Direct Loan Program is Accountable to Students and Taxpayers.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the switch to and implementation of the Direct Loan program. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. James W. Runcie, Chief Operating Officer, Office of Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.; Mr. Ron H. Day, Director of Financial Aid, Kennesaw State University, Kennesaw, Georgia; Ms. Nancy Hoover, Director of Financial Aid, Denison University, Granville, Ohio; and Mr. Mark A. Bandré, Vice President for Enrollment Management and Student Affairs, Baker University, Baldwin City, Kansas.

On November 30, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Keeping College Within Reach: Discussing Ways Institutions Can Streamline Costs and Reduce Tuition.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight innovative practices institutions of higher education are implementing to reduce their costs to limit tuition increases for students. Testifying before the subcommittee were Ms. Jane V. Wellman, Executive Director, Delta Project on Postsecondary Costs, Productivity, and Accountability, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Ronald E. Manahan, President, Grace College and Seminary, Winona Lake, Indiana; Mr. Jamie P. Merisotis, President and Chief Executive Officer, Lumina Foundation for Education, Indianapolis, Indiana; and Mr. Tim Foster, President, Colorado Mesa University, Grand Junction, Colorado.

Legislative action—First session

On February 17, 2011, the House of Representatives considered an amendment offered by Chairman John Kline (R–MN), Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R–NC), and Rep. Alcee Hastings (D–FL) to H.R. 1, the *Disaster Relief Appropriations Act of 2013*. The amendment prohibited the use of funds by the U.S. Department of Education to implement and enforce the gainful employment regulation. The amendment was agreed to by a bipartisan vote of 289 to 136.

On February 19, 2011, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1 by a vote of 235 to 189. The amendment was not included in the bill at final passage.

On June 3, 2011, Chairman John Kline (R–MN) and Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R–NC) introduced H.R. 2117, the *Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act*. The bill repealed the state authorization regulation, one piece of the credit hour regulation, and prohibited the secretary of education from defining credit hour for any purpose under the *Higher Education Act of 1965*.

On June 15, 2011, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 2117 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a bipartisan vote of 27 to 11.

The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 2117:

- Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R–NC) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to add a short title to the legislation. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendments to H.R. 2117, which were not adopted:

- Rep. Raúl Grijalva (D–AZ) offered an amendment to maintain pieces of the state authorization regulation, including the complaint process. The amendment failed by a vote of 17 to 22.
- Ranking Member George Miller (D–CA) offered an amendment to prohibit implementation until the U.S. Department of Education Inspector General certifies there are equal or greater protections in place related to program integrity under Title IV of the *Higher Education Act of 1965*. The amendment failed by a vote of 17 to 22.
- Rep. Rush Holt (D–NJ) offered an amendment to stipulate the act will be effective only if the maximum Pell Grant award is at least \$5,550 for the 2012–2013 school year. The amendment was ruled out of order.
- Rep. Tim Bishop (D–NY) offered an amendment to strike the repeal of the credit hour regulation that establishes a federal definition of a “credit hour.” The amendment failed by a vote of 11 to 27.
- Rep. Tim Bishop (D–NY) offered an amendment to strike the prohibition on the secretary of education from defining credit hour in the future. The amendment failed by a vote of 16 to 22.

Hearings—Second session

On July 18, 2012, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training

held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Keeping College Within Reach: Exploring State Efforts to Curb Costs.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight innovative practices at the state level to assist postsecondary institutions in keeping costs affordable and to promote accountability of public funds. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. Scott Pattison, Executive Director, National Association of State Budget Officers, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Teresa Lubbers, Commissioner for Higher Education, State of Indiana, Indianapolis, Indiana; Mr. Stan Jones, President, Complete College America, Zionsville, Indiana; and Dr. Joe May, President, Louisiana Community and Technical College System, Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

On September 20, 2012, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Assessing College Data: Helping to Provide Valuable Information to Students, Institutions, and Taxpayers.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine data collected by the federal government from institutions of higher education, including data requirements established during the last reauthorization of the *Higher Education Act*. Testifying before the subcommittee were Dr. Mark Schneider, Vice President, American Institutes for Research, Washington, D.C.; Dr. James Hallmark, Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, Texas A&M System, College Station, Texas; Dr. José Cruz, Vice President for Higher Education Policy and Practice, The Education Trust, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Tracy Fitzsimmons, President, Shenandoah University, Winchester, Virginia.

Legislative action—Second session

On February 28, 2012, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2117 by a bipartisan vote of 303 to 114. The bill was sent to the Senate and referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

On April 25, 2012, Rep. Judy Biggert (R–IL) introduced H.R. 4628, the *Interest Rate Reduction Act*. The bill reduced the interest rate on subsidized Stafford loans made to undergraduate students from 6.8 percent to 3.4 percent for one year, from July 1, 2012, through June 30, 2013. To offset the increase in mandatory spending, the bill repealed the Prevention and Public Health Fund authorized under Section 4002 of the *Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act* and rescinded the balance of unobligated monies made available for the fund.

On April 27, 2012, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 4628 by a vote of 215 to 195.

While H.R. 4628 was never considered by the Senate, its provisions were included in the Conference Report for H.R. 4348, the *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP–21), sponsored by Rep. John Mica (R–FL). To partially offset the increase in mandatory spending that resulted from the temporary reduction in interest rates on subsidized Stafford loans, the bill permanently restricted the period of eligibility to borrow subsidized Stafford loans to 150 percent of the published length of a student’s educational program.

On June 29, 2012, the House of Representatives passed the Conference Report to H.R. 4348 by a bipartisan vote of 373 to 52.

On June 29, 2012, the Senate passed the Conference Report to H.R. 4348 by a bipartisan vote of 74 to 19.

On July 6, 2012, the President of the United States signed H.R. 4348 into law (P.L. 112–141).

113TH CONGRESS

Hearings—First session

On March 13, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., on “Keeping College Within Reach: Examining Opportunities to Strengthen Federal Student Loan Programs.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine ways to strengthen federal student loans, as well as how moving to a market-based or variable interest rate on all federal student loans could benefit both students and taxpayers. Testifying before the committee were Dr. Deborah J. Lucas, Sloan Distinguished Professor of Finance, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts; Mr. Jason Delisle, Director, Federal Education Budget Project, The New America Foundation, Washington, D.C.; Mr. Justin Draeger, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Charmaine Mercer, Vice President of Policy, Alliance for Excellent Education, Washington, D.C.

On April 9, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Monroe, Michigan, entitled “Reviving Our Economy: The Role of Higher Education in Job Growth and Development.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight work being done by local colleges and universities to respond to local and state economic needs. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. Henry Lievens, Commissioner, Monroe County, Monroe, Michigan; Ms. Lynette Dowler, Plant Director, Fossil Generation, DTE Energy, Detroit, Michigan; Ms. Susan Smith, Executive Director, Economic Development Partnership of Hillsdale County, Jonesville, Michigan; Mr. Dan Fairbanks, United Auto Workers International Representative, UAW–GM Skill Development and Training Department, Detroit, Michigan; Dr. David E. Nixon, President, Monroe County Community College, Monroe, Michigan; Sister Peg Albert, OP, Ph.D., President, Siena Heights University, Adrian, Michigan; Dr. Michelle Shields, Career Coach/Workforce Development Director, Jackson Community College, Jackson, Michigan; and Mr. Douglas A. Levy, Director of Financial Aid, Macomb Community College, Warren, Michigan.

On April 16, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: The Role of Federal Student Aid Programs.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine shifting the focus of federal student aid programs from enhancing access to improving student outcomes. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. Terry W. Hartle, Senior Vice President, Division of Government and Public Affairs, American Council on Education, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Moriah Miles, State Chair, Minnesota State University Student Association, Mankato, Minnesota; Ms. Patricia McGuire, President, Trinity Washington University, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Dan

Madzellan, Former Employee (Retired), U.S. Department of Education, University Park, Maryland.

On April 24, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine ways to improve the information provided by the federal government to inform students and families about their postsecondary education options. Testifying before the subcommittee were Dr. Donald E. Heller, Dean, College of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan; Mr. Alex Garrido, Student, Keiser University, Miami, Florida; Dr. Nicole Farmer Hurd, Founder and Executive Director, National College Advising Corps, Carrboro, North Carolina; and Mr. Travis Reindl, Program Director, Postsecondary Education, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Washington, D.C.

On June 13, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Discussing Program Quality through Accreditation.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the historical role of accreditation, discuss the role of regional and national accreditors in measuring institutional quality, and contemplate areas for reform. Testifying before the subcommittee were Dr. Elizabeth H. Sibolski, President, Middle States Commission on Higher Education, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania; Dr. Michale McComis, Executive Director, Accrediting Commission of Career Schools and Colleges, Arlington, Virginia; Ms. Anne D. Neal, President, American Council of Trustees and Alumni, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Kevin Carey, Director of the Education Policy Program, The New America Foundation, Washington, D.C.

On July 9, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Improving Higher Education through Innovation.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight innovation in higher education occurring at the state and institutional level and in the private sector. Testifying before the committee were Mr. Scott Jenkins, Director of External Relations, Western Governors University, Salt Lake City, Utah; Dr. Pamela J. Tate, President and Chief Executive Officer, Council for Adult and Experiential Learning, Chicago, Illinois; Dr. Joann A. Boughman, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University System of Maryland, Adelphi, Maryland; and Mr. Burck Smith, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, StraighterLine, Baltimore, Maryland.

On September 11, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Supporting Higher Education Opportunities for America’s Servicemembers and Veterans.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the efforts of higher education to improve postsecondary education opportunities for servicemembers and veterans. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mrs. Kimrey W. Rhinehardt, Vice President for Federal and Military Affairs, The University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill, North Carolina; Dr. Ar-

thur F. Kirk, Jr., President, Saint Leo University, Saint Leo, Florida; Dr. Russell S. Kitchner, Vice President for Regulatory and Governmental Relations, American Public University System, Charles Town, West Virginia; and Dr. Ken Sauer, Senior Associate Commissioner for Research and Academic Affairs, Indiana Commission for Higher Education, Indianapolis, Indiana.

On September 18, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Improving Access and Affordability through Innovative Partnerships.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the efforts of higher education institutions to expand access and reduce costs by partnering with local employers, other colleges, or online course providers. Testifying before the subcommittee were Dr. Jeffrey Docking, President, Adrian College, Adrian, Michigan; Ms. Paula R. Singer, President and Chief Executive Officer, Laureate Global Products and Services, Baltimore, Maryland; Dr. Rich Baraniuk, Professor, Rice University, and Founder, Connexions, Houston, Texas; and Dr. Charles Lee Isbell, Jr., Professor and Senior Associate Dean, College of Computing, Georgia Institute of Technology, Atlanta, Georgia.

On November 13, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Simplifying Federal Student Aid.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the need to streamline, consolidate, and simplify federal student aid programs. Testifying before the committee were Ms. Kristin D. Conklin, Founding Partner, HCM Strategies, LLC, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Sandy Baum, Research Professor of Education Policy, George Washington University Graduate School of Education and Human Development, and Senior Fellow, Urban Institute, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Jennifer Mishory, J.D., Deputy Director, Young Invincibles, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Jason Delisle, Director, Federal Education Budget Project, New America Foundation, Washington, D.C.

On December 3, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Strengthening Pell Grants for Future Generations.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine Pell Grant program reform proposals to better target funds to the neediest students and put the program on a fiscally responsible and sustainable path. Testifying before the subcommittee were Mr. Justin Draeger, President and Chief Executive Officer, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Washington, D.C.; Dr. Jenna Ashley Robinson, Director of Outreach, John W. Pope Center for Higher Education Policy, Raleigh, North Carolina; Mr. Michael Dannenberg, Director of Higher Education and Education Finance Policy, The Education Trust, Washington, D.C.; and Mr. Richard C. Heath, Director of Student Financial Services, Anne Arundel Community College, Arnold, Maryland.

Legislative action—First session

On May 9, 2013, Chairman John Kline (R-MN) and Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) introduced H.R. 1911, the Smarter Solutions for Stu-

dents Act. The bill moved all federal student loans (except Perkins loans) to a market-based interest rate.

On May 16, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 1911 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a bipartisan vote of 24 to 13.

The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 1911:

- Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R–NC) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to make a technical change to the bill. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendments to H.R. 1911, which were not adopted:

- Rep. Joe Heck (R–NV) offered an amendment to allocate a portion of the savings generated under the bill to Pell Grants. The amendment was withdrawn.
- Rep. Joe Heck (R–NV) offered an amendment to provide the secretary of education with authority to reduce the interest rate on student loans if a borrower makes the first 48 payments on time. The amendment was withdrawn.
- Rep. John Tierney (D–MA) offered an amendment to set the federal student loan interest rates at the same rate the Federal Reserve charges to banks for two years. The amendment failed by a vote of 14 to 23.
- Rep. Joe Courtney (D–CT) offered an amendment to extend the 3.4 percent interest rate on subsidized Stafford loans for two years. The amendment failed by a vote of 15 to 21.

On May 23, 2013, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 1911 by a bipartisan vote of 221 to 198.

On July 24, 2013, the Senate passed a substitute version of H.R. 1911, the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act, by a bipartisan vote of 81 to 18. The legislation allowed student loan interest rates to reset once a year by the market, but lock into a fixed rate once the loan is disbursed to the student. Interest rates would be set using the following formulas:

- Undergraduate Stafford loans (subsidized and unsubsidized): 10-year Treasury Note plus 2.05 percent, capped at 8.25 percent.
- Graduate Stafford loans: 10-year Treasury Note plus 3.6 percent, capped at 9.5 percent
- PLUS loans (graduate and parent): 10-year Treasury Note plus 4.6 percent, capped at 10.5 percent.

On July 31, 2013, the House of Representatives agreed to suspend the rules and agree to the Senate amendment to H.R. 1911 by a bipartisan vote of 392 to 31.

On August 9, 2013, the President of the United States signed H.R. 1911 into law (P.L. 113–28).

On May 13, 2013, Rep. Luke Messer (R–IN) introduced H.R. 1949, the Improving Postsecondary Education Data for Students Act. The bill directed the secretary of education to convene an Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on the factors students and families want, need, and already consider when choosing a higher education institution.

On May 16, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 1949 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a voice vote. The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 1949:

- Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to H.R. 1949 to (1) include individuals who represent undergraduate and graduate education; college and career counselors at secondary schools; experts in data policy, collection, and use; and experts in labor markets on the list of individuals required to be represented on the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data; (2) ensure individuals on the advisory committee represent economic, racial, and geographically diverse populations; (3) require the advisory committee to examine information related to the sources of financial assistance, including federal student loans, as part of the required aspects of the study; (4) require the advisory committee to examine how information regarding student outcomes should be disaggregated for first-generation students; and (5) provide other conforming and technical changes to the bill. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

On May 23, 2013, the House of Representatives agreed to suspend the rules and pass H.R. 1949 by voice vote. The bill was sent to the Senate and referred to the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

On July 10, 2013, Chairman John Kline (R-MN), Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC), and Rep. Alcee Hastings (D-FL) introduced H.R. 2637, the Supporting Academic Freedom through Regulatory Relief Act. The bill, which included the text of the Protecting Academic Freedom in Higher Education Act (H.R. 2117) and the Kline/Foxx/Hastings amendment to H.R. 1 from the 112th Congress, repealed the credit hour, state authorization, and gainful employment regulations and amended the statute to clarify the incentive compensation regulation. Additionally, the bill prohibited the U.S. Department of Education from issuing related regulations until after Congress reauthorizes the Higher Education Act.

On July 24, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 2637 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a bipartisan vote of 22 to 13.

The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 2637:

- Subcommittee Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to change a subsection title in the legislation. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendment to H.R. 2637, which was not adopted:

- Rep. Tim Bishop (D-NY) offered an amendment to strike the prohibition on the U.S. Department of Education from issuing regulations related to state authorization, gainful employment, and credit hour. The amendment failed by a vote of 13 to 22.

Hearings—Second session

On January 28, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Sharing Best Practices for Serving Low-Income and First Generation Students.” The purpose of the hearing was to highlight best practices at institutions of higher education for serving low-income and first generation students. Testifying before the subcommittee were Dr. James Anderson, Chancellor, Fayetteville State University, Fayetteville, North Carolina; Mrs. Mary Beth Del Balzo, Senior Executive Vice President and Chief Executive Officer, The College of Westchester, White Plains, New York; Mr. Josse Alex Garrido, Graduate Student, University of Texas—Pan American, Edinburg, Texas; and Rev. Dennis H. Holtschneider, President, DePaul University, Chicago, Illinois.

On February 27, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education and Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a joint hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Exploring Efforts to Strengthen the Teaching Profession.” The purpose of the hearing was to discuss the state of teacher preparation nationwide. Testifying before the subcommittees were Dr. Deborah A. Gist, Commissioner, Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Providence, Rhode Island; Dr. Marcy Singer-Gabella, Professor of the Practice of Education, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, Tennessee; Dr. Heather Peske, Associate Commissioner for Educator Quality, Massachusetts Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Malden, Massachusetts; and Ms. Christina Hall, Co-Founder and Co-Director, Urban Teacher Center, Baltimore, Maryland.

On March 12, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Examining the Mismanagement of the Student Loan Rehabilitation Process.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine the U.S. Department of Education’s ability to oversee the processing of rehabilitated loans issued under the Direct Loan program. Testifying before the subcommittee were Ms. Melissa Emrey-Arras, Director of Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, U.S. Government Accountability Office, Boston, Massachusetts; The Honorable Kathleen Tighe, Inspector General, Department of Education, Washington, D.C.; Mr. James Runcie, Chief Operating Officer, Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education, Washington, D.C.; and Ms. Peg Julius, Executive Director of Enrollment Management, Kirkwood Community College, Cedar Rapids, Iowa.

On March 20, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Mesa, Arizona, entitled “Reviving our Economy: Supporting a 21st Century Workforce.” The purpose of the hearing was to explore the role of local higher education institutions in fostering job creation and growth through innovative partnerships with the business community and new modes of teaching delivery. Testifying before the committee were The Honorable Rick Heumann, Vice Mayor, City of Chandler, Arizona; Ms. Cathleen Barton, Education Manager, Intel Corporate Affairs, Southwestern United States, Intel Corporation, Chandler, Arizona; Mr. Lee D.

Lambert, J.D., Chancellor, Pima Community College, Tucson, Arizona; Dr. William Pepicello, President, University of Phoenix, Tempe, Arizona; Dr. Michael Crow, President, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona; Dr. Ann Weaver Hart, President, The University of Arizona, Tucson, Arizona; Dr. Ernest A. Lara, President, Estrella Mountain Community College, Avondale, Arizona; and Ms. Christy Farley, Vice President of Government Affairs and Business Partnerships, Northern Arizona University, Phoenix, Arizona.

On April 2, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing in Washington, D.C., entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Meeting the Needs of Contemporary Students.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine how institutions, states, and other entities assist contemporary college students in accessing and completing postsecondary education. Testifying before the committee were Dr. George A. Pruitt, President, Thomas Edison State College, Trenton, New Jersey; Dr. Kevin Gilligan, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer, Capella Education Company, Minneapolis, Minnesota; Mr. David Moldoff, Chief Executive Officer and Founder, AcademyOne, Inc., West Chester, Pennsylvania; Dr. Joann A. Boughman, Senior Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs, University System of Maryland, Adelphi, Maryland; Mr. Stan Jones, President, Complete College America, Indianapolis, Indiana; and Dr. Brooks A. Keel, President, Georgia Southern University, Statesboro, Georgia.

Legislative action—Second session

On September 19, 2013, Rep. Matt Salmon (R–AZ), Rep. Susan Brooks (R–IN), and Rep. Jared Polis (D–CO) introduced H.R. 3136, the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act of 2013. The bill directs the secretary of education to select institutions or consortia of institutions for voluntary participation in competency-based education demonstration projects that provide participating entities with the ability to offer competency-based education programs that do not meet certain statutory and regulatory requirements which would otherwise prevent them from participating in federal student aid programs.

On July 10, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 3136 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a voice vote. The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 3136:

- Rep. Matt Salmon (R–AZ) and Rep. Jared Polis (D–CO) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to add certain requirements to the applications to participate in a competency-based education project, allow eligible entities to submit amendments to their previously-approved applications, set requirements for the entities the secretary must choose to participate in the programs, require institutions to provide student information to the director of the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), require the director of IES to annually evaluate each project and provide a report with specified information to the authorizing committees, authorize funds to be available from the amount appropriated for salaries and expenses of the Department of Education, and make conforming and technical

changes to the introduced bill. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendment to H.R. 2637, which was not adopted:

- Rep. Tierney (D–MA) offered an amendment that would allow students with federal student loans and private student loans issued prior to 2013 to refinance those loans into new federal loans at the interest rate set for the 2013–2014 academic year. The amendment was ruled non-germane. Rep. George Miller (D–CA) appealed the ruling of the chair. Rep. Glenn Thompson (R–PA) offered a motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the chair, which was adopted by a vote of 22 to 16.

On June 26, 2014, Rep. Virginia Foxx (R–NC) and Rep. Luke Messer (R–IN) introduced H.R. 4983, the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act. The bill simplifies and streamlines the information made publicly available by the Secretary of Education regarding institutions of higher education.

On July 10, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 4983 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a voice vote. The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 4983:

- Rep. Virginia Foxx (R–NC) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to require additional information on the College Dashboard, require the secretary of education to conduct consumer testing in consultation with appropriate federal departments and agencies, ensure consumer testing addresses whether the College Dashboard provides useful and relevant information to students and families, require the secretary of education to submit to the authorizing committees recommendations based on the results of consumer testing, set new minimum requirements for net price calculators, require funding to come from funds already appropriated to maintain the College Navigator, and make other conforming and technical changes. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendment to H.R. 4983, which was not adopted:

- Rep. George Miller (D–CA) offered an amendment that would require the commissioner of education statistics to establish a formula for determining the percentage of student borrowers who have completed their course of study and who are in repayment or in an authorized deferment period at three, five and 10 years after completion of a program of study. The amendment failed by a vote of 13 to 21.

On June 26, 2014, Rep. Brett Guthrie (R–KY) and Rep. Richard Hudson (R–NC) introduced H.R. 4984, the Empowering Students through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act. The bill amends the loan counseling requirements under the Higher Education Act and requires counseling for Federal Pell Grant recipients.

On July 10, 2014, the Committee on Education and the Workforce considered H.R. 4984 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by voice vote. The committee considered and adopted the following amendment to H.R. 4984:

- Rep. Brett Guthrie (R-KY) and Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) offered an amendment in the nature of a substitute to remove the requirement that annual counseling for Pell Grant recipients be tied to disbursement of the grant, require additional information be disclosed to borrowers during annual counseling and exit counseling sessions, require institutions to provide annual counseling to borrowers receiving Parent PLUS loans, require any funds used to carry out the act to come from funds already appropriated to maintain the Financial Awareness Counseling Tool, and make conforming and technical changes. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.

The committee further considered the following amendment to H.R. 4984, which was not adopted:

- Rep. Susan Davis (D-CA) offered an amendment to modify the rule requiring for-profit colleges to receive at least 10 percent of their revenue from sources other than the Department of Education to remain eligible for federal student aid to include all federal aid, including veterans' educational benefits and some Workforce Investment Act funds, in the 90 percent portion of the calculation and only private funds in the 10 percent portion of the calculation. The amendment was ruled non-germane. Rep. George Miller (D-CA) appealed the ruling of the chair. Rep. Glenn Thompson (R-PA) offered a motion to table the appeal of the ruling of the chair, which was adopted by a vote of 20 to 13.

SUMMARY

The Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act would begin to streamline the overwhelming maze of consumer information about institutions of higher education provided to students and families by the federal government through a consumer-tested, internet-based "College Dashboard" website. The College Dashboard would provide students with key pieces of prominently displayed information on enrollment, completion, net price, and average loan debt. The College Dashboard also would provide wage data collected by the Bureau of Labor Statistics and a link to campus safety information. The College Dashboard would provide consumers with additional disaggregated enrollment and completion information on key populations of students.

The secretary of education is currently only required to publish information regarding first-time students who attend classes full-time, ignoring the majority of the current college population. To ensure the federal government provides a more complete picture of the higher education landscape, the legislation would require the commissioner of education statistics to ensure completion data is reflective of all students, both traditional and contemporary students alike. Additionally, the legislation would allow students to easily compare institutions as they make their college decisions and would require the secretary of education to provide a link to the College Dashboard page for each institution listed on a student's Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form. To avoid duplication and reduce confusion for students, the legislation directs the secretary of education to coordinate with other federal agencies to ensure all published higher education data is consistent with information available on the College Dashboard.

The legislation improves existing institutional net price calculators to ensure students are able to find easily the calculators and to understand information provided by the calculators. Calculators must now be clearly labeled as a net price calculator, and they must be prominently, clearly, and conspicuously posted on institution's website where other information on costs and student aid is available. Calculators must provide information on net price, cost of attendance, available grant aid, and veterans' educational benefits. The legislation would prohibit any personally identifiable information provided by users on institutional net price calculators from being sold or made available to third parties.

COMMITTEE VIEWS

Introduction

Selecting a college or university is a personal decision for students and their families. To assist them, the federal government has taken steps in recent years to improve data collection and transparency in higher education. The Higher Education Opportunity Act, the 2008 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA), required colleges and universities to make information about price, financial aid, and basic facts and figures, such as student demographics and graduation rates, readily available to the public. There also are numerous other federal transparency initiatives currently available to students and their families, both authorized under the HEA and created by various federal entities. However, instead of providing clarity, these initiatives often add more confusion by presenting conflicting or redundant information with limited opportunity to compare different education options. To further complicate matters, available data does not include a large portion of the current college-going population or capture all crucial information students and families need to view and understand the entire landscape of higher education.

Despite attempts by the federal government to improve data collection and transparency in the higher education system, students and families still struggle to access and understand information helpful in selecting the right postsecondary institution for their unique situations. Meanwhile, higher education leaders have raised concerns about the overwhelming amount of federal data and reporting requirements, some of which are duplicative of state and local efforts and may partially contribute to the increase in college costs.

Ensuring straightforward and useful college data

To help provide students and families with the information they need to make smart decisions about their higher education options, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN) introduced H.R. 4983, the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act. The legislation would streamline the majority of federal transparency initiatives authorized under the HEA into one consumer-tested College Dashboard website that would prominently display the key pieces of information students need when deciding which school to attend.

During an April 24, 2013, hearing entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers,” the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training explored opportunities to streamline and improve higher education data for students. At the hearing, Mr. Travis Reindl, program director for the education division at the National Governors Association, urged Congress to take up such an effort:

Simpler and clearer should be a goal for federal efforts. The upcoming reauthorization of the Higher Education Act provides a prime opportunity for the [sic] Congress to review all of the existing dashboards, report cards, and data tools for postsecondary education to determine whether and how they are being used and if there are opportunities for streamlining or consolidation.¹

Recognizing the reauthorization of the HEA as an opportunity for the committee to re-evaluate the usefulness of some federal transparency initiatives and data collections, H.R. 4983 repeals the College Navigator, the College Affordability and Transparency Lists, the State Higher Education Spending Chart, and the Multi-year Tuition Calculator. Under the bill, the secretary would no longer be required to collect and publish information on institutions a student could easily find on the institution’s website, such as institutional mission, average college admission test scores, percentage of students accepted each year, number of degrees awarded, and most popular majors offered. Instead, H.R. 4983 would create a streamlined and consumer-tested College Dashboard that prominently displays only the crucial data points on each institution that students and families need to begin to make an informed decision, such as the size and type of the institution, the net price to attend, the average federal student loan debt of a borrower upon graduation, and the completion rates of students who attend the institution. Additionally, the legislation would ensure the College Dashboard allows students to easily compare this information for different institutions.

The committee appreciates the value of the various non-federal efforts available to students that provide consumer information, for example the College Portrait, which was created as a part of Voluntary System of Accountability developed by the Association of Public and Land-grant Universities and the American Association of State Colleges, and the University & College Accountability Network (U-CAN), which was created by the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities. The committee continues to believe institutions of higher education are an important resource for providing current and potential students with information they need and want to know, and they should continue to provide students relevant information through efforts like those described above and on the individual websites.

The committee notes there are a number of federal agencies in addition to the U.S. Department of Education that collect and publicly report information on colleges and universities, including, but not limited to, the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs, the U.S. Department of Defense, and the Consumer Financial Protection

¹ <http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=308347>.

Bureau. To avoid duplication and reduce confusion for students, H.R. 4983 directs the secretary of education to coordinate with these other federal agencies to ensure all published higher education data is consistent with information available on the College Dashboard.

Making higher education data relevant for contemporary students

Over the last 10 years, the dynamics of higher education have shifted dramatically. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), non-traditional or contemporary students now comprise a majority of all undergraduates. This trend is expected to continue in the coming years; in fact, NCES expects enrollments of students older than 25 will rise by 20 percent between 2010 and 2020.² Despite their growing majority, these contemporary students are largely ignored in the current higher education data collection efforts. Under current law, the secretary of education is only required to publish information regarding first-time students who attend classes full-time, generally leaving out those students who are older and have families or jobs and who often go to school part-time or have previous college experience. To ensure the federal government provides a complete picture of the higher education landscape, the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act would require the commissioner of education statistics to ensure completion data is reflective all of students, both traditional and contemporary students. H.R. 4983 also would require the publishing of information on the cost per credit hour, or the credit hour equivalency, on the College Dashboard, so students who attend school less than full-time would now be able to have a more relevant cost estimate.

The committee appreciates the effort by the higher education community to create better and more comprehensive completion metrics that include a larger percentage of the current college-going population. Particularly, the committee believes the Student Achievement Measure³ and the efforts of the Committee on Measures for Student Success provide a good foundation for the commissioner's development of more robust completion metrics. The committee expects the commissioner would consult these entities and others during the development of the metrics.

For students and families to know more about a particular institution, the College Dashboard, on subsequent pages linked to the main page, would provide consumers with additional disaggregated enrollment and completion information on key populations of students. For the first time, institutions would be required to report on the completion by Pell Grant recipients as well as borrowers of both subsidized and unsubsidized Federal Direct Stafford loans. In the last year alone, the federal government spent more than \$135 billion on federal student aid,⁴ yet we have no data on whether these dollars are actually helping students graduate. H.R. 4983 would begin to help not only students and families, but also taxpayers and policymakers understand the impact of federal student aid dollars.

² <http://nces.ed.gov/fastfacts/display.asp?id=98>.

³ <http://www.studentachievementmeasure.org/>.

⁴ Trends in Student Aid, The CollegeBoard, 2013, available at <http://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/student-aid-2013-full-report-140108.pdf>.

In recent years, states, researchers, business leaders, and members of Congress also have discussed the possibility of reporting the salaries of college graduates from public and private universities. However, the committee is concerned the reporting of post-graduation earnings data currently is not feasible for institutions and would place an enormous burden on institutions if required to do so. Additionally, the committee has significant concerns about the implications on student privacy of requiring this type of data collection. Furthermore, the committee believes earnings data alone is not necessarily an appropriate measure by which students and families can assess the value of an institution. At the April 24, 2013, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training hearing entitled “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers,” Dr. Donald Heller, dean of the college of education at Michigan State University, noted the potential complications with relying solely on post-graduation earnings to determine the value of a college or university:

While there are important vocational training components of many postsecondary programs, a college education—whether it is one that leads to a bachelor’s degree or not—confers returns to the individual and society that cannot be valued only by the simple measurement of an individual’s wages in her first job after college.

However, as college costs continue to increase, the committee recognizes the importance of giving potential students a picture of the type of return they can expect on their investment in higher education. H.R. 4983 requires the secretary of education to provide a link to data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on national and regional starting salaries for each occupation on each institution’s College Dashboard page. The committee believes the Department of Labor’s Career One Stop website (<http://www.careeronestop.org/SalariesBenefits/Sal—default.aspx>) displays this information in a way that students and families can easily understand, and the committee suggests using this link on the College Dashboard. This information would allow students to see what they could potentially earn in a particular occupation and then to decide if those potential earnings match up to the cost of the institution under consideration.

Ensuring effective delivery of information to students and families

The Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act would require the secretary of education, in consultation with other relevant agencies, to conduct consumer testing of the College Dashboard with relevant stakeholders, such as current and prospective college students, family members of students, institutions of higher education, and higher education experts, to ensure information on the dashboard is presented in the most user-friendly manner possible to assist students and families searching for the institution of higher education that best fits their unique needs. Based on the consumer testing, the secretary of education would be required to report to Congress any recommendations for needed changes to the information required to be provided on the College Dashboard.

Despite the deluge of federal resources available, when interviewed, students and families often cite different areas and modes

of research than what policymakers in Washington believe they should be examining. Students often rely on information from friends, family, or directly from institutions, or they simply choose the school closest to their homes. More often than not, students and families rely on information based on personalized effects, rather than empirical information provided by the federal government. At the April 24, 2013, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training hearing, Mr. Alexander Garrido, a student at Keiser University in Miami, Florida, stated, “I was not aware of any navigation tools from the Department of Education, which was why my decision was based mostly on my visit and the support of my friends and family.”⁵

Recognizing many students are simply unaware of the resources provided by the federal government to assist in their college search, H.R. 4983 instructs the secretary of education to provide a link to the College Dashboard page for each institution listed on a student’s FAFSA form. This would ensure students are provided with the information they need to make knowledgeable decisions about college options at the time they are actually making those decisions.

At the same hearing, Dr. Donald Heller summarized the current task before policymakers:

[T]he Internet has greatly helped to democratize access to information. What it has not done as successfully, however, has been to help people get access to the right information to meet their needs. And it is critical that we help prospective students to get the right information in their hands at the necessary times.⁶

Students and families may be deterred from using federal transparency resources for a variety of reasons, including their exceptional length or complicated and inconsistent delivery of information. The Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act would ensure the information required to be provided by the U.S. Department of Education is not only helpful information, but also that it is easily understood and provided to students at the appropriate time.

Conclusion

With over 6,000 public, private, non-profit, and proprietary institutions of higher education, the American higher education system affords students from all backgrounds opportunities to find the institutions that meet their unique needs. The Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act would take an important step toward strengthening our higher education system by improving transparency and ensuring all students and families have access to the information they need to make the best decisions about their education.

⁵ <http://edworkforce.house.gov/calendar/eventsingle.aspx?EventID=330710>.

⁶ *Ibid.*

SECTION-BY-SECTION ANALYSIS

Section 1. Short title

States the short title is the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act.

Section 2. College Dashboard website

Amends section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to ensure published transparency data includes information about more than just first-time students and repeals the College Navigator, the College Affordability and Transparency Lists, the State Higher Education Spending Chart, and the Multi-year Tuition Calculator required under section 132.

Directs the secretary of education to develop and make publicly available a “College Dashboard” website that includes information on enrollment, completion, cost, financial aid, and faculty listed in simple and understandable terms for each institution of higher education that participates in a program under Title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.

Directs the secretary of education to conduct consumer testing to ensure the College Dashboard is usable, easily understandable, and provides useful and relevant information to students and families. Requires the secretary of education to submit to the authorizing committees any recommendations based on the results of consumer testing for changing the information required to be provided on the College Dashboard.

Requires the secretary of education to provide to each student submitting a FAFSA a link to the webpage of the College Dashboard website for each institution of higher education the student includes on the FAFSA.

Directs the secretary of education to coordinate with other federal agencies to ensure all published higher education data is consistent with information available on the College Dashboard.

Section 3. Net price calculators

Amends section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 to set minimum requirements for net price calculators regarding their design, placement on institutions’ websites, and information required to be included.

Prohibits any personally identifiable information provided by users on institutional net price calculators from being sold or made available to third parties.

Section 4. Funding

Provides for \$1,000,000 of the funds authorized to be appropriated to the U.S. Department of Education to maintain the College Navigator website to carry out this act, and specifies no additional funds are authorized to be appropriated by this act.

EXPLANATION OF AMENDMENTS

The amendments, including the amendment in the nature of a substitute, are explained in the body of this report.

APPLICATION OF LAW TO THE LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1 requires a description of the application of this bill to the legislative branch. H.R. 4983 streamlines and improves the information made available by the secretary of education about institutions of higher education in order to help students and families make more informed decisions about postsecondary education options.

UNFUNDED MANDATE STATEMENT

Section 423 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act (as amended by Section 101(a)(2) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act, P.L. 104–4) requires a statement of whether the provisions of the reported bill include unfunded mandates. This issue is addressed in the CBO letter.

EARMARK STATEMENT

H.R. 4983 does not contain any congressional earmarks, limited tax benefits, or limited tariff benefits as defined in clause 9 of House Rule XXI.

ROLL CALL VOTES

Clause 3(b) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires the Committee Report to include for each record vote on a motion to report the measure or matter and on any amendments offered to the measure or matter the total number of votes for and against and the names of the Members voting for and against.

Date: July 10, 2014**COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND THE WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE**Roll Call: 1 Bill: H.R. 4983 Amendment Number: 2Disposition: Defeated by a vote of 13 yeas and 21 naysSponsor/Amendment: Miller amendment / loan repayment rate metric

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. KLINE (MN) (Chairman)		X		Mr. MILLER (CA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. PETRI (WI)		X		Mr. SCOTT (VA)	X		
Mr. McKEON (CA)		X		Mr. HINOJOSA (TX)			X
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mrs. McCARTHY (NY)			X
Mrs. FOXX (NC)		X		Mr. TIERNEY (MA)	X		
Mr. PRICE (GA)		X		Mr. HOLT (NJ)	X		
Mr. MARCHANT (TX)		X		Mrs. DAVIS (CA)	X		
Mr. HUNTER (CA)		X		Mr. GRIJALVA (AZ)			X
Mr. ROE (TN)		X		Mr. BISHOP (NY)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Mr. LOEBSACK (IA)	X		
Mr. WALBERG (MI)		X		Mr. COURTNEY (CT)	X		
Mr. SALMON (AZ)			X	Ms. FUDGE (OH)			X
Mr. GUTHRIE (KY)		X		Mr. POLIS (CO)			X
Mr. DesJARLAIS (TN)			X	Mr. SABLAN (MP)	X		
Mr. ROKITA (IN)		X		Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. BUCSHON (IN)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Mr. BARLETTA (PA)		X		Mr. POCAN (WI)	X		
Mr. HECK (NV)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA)	X		
Mr. KELLY (PA)		X					
Mrs. BROOKS (IN)		X					
Mr. HUDSON (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSER (IN)		X					
Mr. BYRNE (AL)		X					

TOTALS: Aye: 13 No: 21 Not Voting: 7

Total: 41 / Quorum: 14 / Report: 21

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause (3)(c) of House rule XIII, the goal of H.R. 4983 is to streamline and improve the information made available by the secretary of education about institutions of higher education in order to help students and families make more informed decisions about postsecondary education options.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No provision of H.R. 4983 establishes or reauthorizes a program of the Federal Government known to be duplicative of another Federal program, a program that was included in any report from the Government Accountability Office to Congress pursuant to section 21 of Public Law 111–139, or a program related to a program identified in the most recent Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance.

DISCLOSURE OF DIRECTED RULE MAKINGS

The committee estimates that enacting H.R. 4983 does not specifically direct the completion of any specific rule makings within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. 551.

STATEMENT OF OVERSIGHT FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE COMMITTEE

In compliance with clause 3(c)(1) of rule XIII and clause 2(b)(1) of rule X of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the committee's oversight findings and recommendations are reflected in the body of this report.

NEW BUDGET AUTHORITY AND CBO COST ESTIMATE

With respect to the requirements of clause 3(c)(2) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 308(a) of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974 and with respect to requirements of clause 3(c)(3) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives and section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act of 1974, the committee has received the following estimate for H.R. 4983 from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office:

U.S. CONGRESS,
CONGRESSIONAL BUDGET OFFICE,
Washington, DC, July 15, 2014.

Hon. JOHN KLINE,
*Chairman, Committee on Education and the Workforce,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: The Congressional Budget Office has prepared the enclosed cost estimate for H.R. 4983, the Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act.

If you wish further details on this estimate, we will be pleased to provide them. The CBO staff contact is Justin Humphrey.

Sincerely,

DOUGLAS W. ELMENDORF.

Enclosure.

H.R. 4983—Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act

H.R. 4983 would reserve \$1 million from funding for the Department of Education to replace the current College Navigator website with a new website and change the type of information that the website would need to provide. The bill also would amend the requirements for the department’s net-price calculator, which provides details on the costs of post-secondary education.

CBO estimates that implementing H.R. 4983 would require \$1 million for administrative costs for the department over the 2015–2019 period, assuming the availability of appropriated funds.

Enacting the bill would not affect direct spending or revenues; therefore, pay-as-you-go procedures do not apply.

H.R. 4983 contains no intergovernmental or private-sector mandates as defined in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act and would impose no costs on state, local, or tribal governments.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Justin Humphrey. This estimate was approved by Peter H. Fontaine, Assistant Director for Budget Analysis.

COMMITTEE COST ESTIMATE

Clause 3(d)(1) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives requires an estimate and a comparison of the costs that would be incurred in carrying out H.R. 4983. However, clause 3(d)(2)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when the committee has included in its report a timely submitted cost estimate of the bill prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office under section 402 of the Congressional Budget Act.

CHANGES IN EXISTING LAW MADE BY THE BILL, AS REPORTED

In compliance with clause 3(e) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, changes in existing law made by the bill, as reported, are shown as follows (existing law proposed to be omitted is enclosed in black brackets, new matter is printed in *italic*, existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

* * * * *

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS

* * * * *

PART C—COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

* * * * *

SEC. 131. IMPROVEMENTS IN MARKET INFORMATION AND PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION.

(a) * * *

* * * * *

(h) **NO USER FEES FOR DEPARTMENT FINANCIAL AID WEBSITES.**—No fee shall be charged to any individual to access—

(1) a database or website of the Department that provides information about higher education programs or student financial assistance, including the **College Navigator** *College Dashboard* website (or successor website) and the websites and databases described in this section and section 132; or

* * * * *

SEC. 132. TRANSPARENCY IN COLLEGE TUITION FOR CONSUMERS.

(a) **DEFINITIONS.**—In this section:

[(1) COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE.— The term “College Navigator website” means the College Navigator website operated by the Department and includes any successor website.]

(1) COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.— *The term “College Dashboard website” means the College Dashboard website required under subsection (d).*

(2) **COST OF ATTENDANCE.**— The term “cost of attendance” means the average annual cost of tuition and fees, room and board, books, supplies, and transportation for an institution of higher education for a **[first-time,]** full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution.

(3) **NET PRICE.**— The term “net price” means the average yearly price actually charged to **[first-time,]** full-time undergraduate students receiving student aid at an institution of higher education after deducting such aid, which shall be determined by calculating the difference between—

(A) * * *

* * * * *

(4) **TUITION AND FEES.**— The term “tuition and fees” means the average annual cost of tuition and fees for an institution of higher education for **[first-time,]** full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution.

(b) **CALCULATIONS FOR PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS.**—In making the calculations regarding cost of attendance, net price, and tuition and fees under this section with respect to a public institution of higher education, the Secretary shall calculate the cost of attendance, net price, and tuition and fees at such institution in the manner described in subsection (a), except that—

(1) the cost of attendance, net price, and tuition and fees shall be calculated for **[first-time,]** full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who are residents of the State in which such institution is located; and

(2) in determining the net price, the average need-based grant aid and merit-based grant aid described in subsection (a)(3)(B) shall be calculated based on the average total amount of such aid received by **[first-time,]** full-time undergraduate students who are residents of the State in which such institution is located, divided by the total number of such resident students receiving such need-based grant aid or merit-based grant aid at such institution.

[(c) COLLEGE AFFORDABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY LISTS.—

[(1) AVAILABILITY OF LISTS.— Beginning July 1, 2011, the Secretary shall make publicly available on the College Navigator website, in a manner that is sortable and searchable by State, the following:

[(A) A list of the five percent of institutions in each category described in subsection (d) that have the highest tuition and fees for the most recent academic year for which data are available.

[(B) A list of the five percent of institutions in each such category that have the highest net price for the most recent academic year for which data are available.

[(C) A list of the five percent of institutions in each such category that have the largest increase, expressed as a percentage change, in tuition and fees over the most recent three academic years for which data are available, using the first academic year of the three-year period as the base year to compute such percentage change.

[(D) A list of the five percent of institutions in each such category that have the largest increase, expressed as a percentage change, in net price over the most recent three academic years for which data are available, using the first academic year of the three-year period as the base year to compute such percentage change.

[(E) A list of the ten percent of institutions in each such category that have the lowest tuition and fees for the most recent academic year for which data are available.

[(F) A list of the ten percent of institutions in each such category that have the lowest net price for the most recent academic year for which data are available.

[(2) ANNUAL UPDATES.— The Secretary shall annually update the lists described in paragraph (1) on the College Navigator website.

[(d) CATEGORIES OF INSTITUTIONS.—The lists described in subsection (c)(1) shall be compiled according to the following categories of institutions that participate in programs under title IV:

[(1) Four-year public institutions of higher education.

[(2) Four-year private, nonprofit institutions of higher education.

[(3) Four-year private, for-profit institutions of higher education.

[(4) Two-year public institutions of higher education.

[(5) Two-year private, nonprofit institutions of higher education.

[(6) Two-year private, for-profit institutions of higher education.

[(7) Less than two-year public institutions of higher education.

[(8) Less than two-year private, nonprofit institutions of higher education.

[(9) Less than two-year private, for-profit institutions of higher education.

[(e) REPORTS BY INSTITUTIONS.—

[(1) REPORT TO SECRETARY.— If an institution of higher education is included on a list described in subparagraph (C) or (D) of subsection (c)(1), the institution shall submit to the Secretary a report containing the following information:

[(A) A description of the major areas in the institution's budget with the greatest cost increases.

[(B) An explanation of the cost increases described in subparagraph (A).

[(C) A description of the steps the institution will take toward the goal of reducing costs in the areas described in subparagraph (A).

[(D) In the case of an institution that is included on the same list under subparagraph (C) or (D) of subsection (c)(1) for two or more consecutive years, a description of the progress made on the steps described in subparagraph (C) of this paragraph that were included in the institution's report for the previous year.

[(E) If the determination of any cost increase described in subparagraph (A) is not within the exclusive control of the institution—

[(i) an explanation of the extent to which the institution participates in determining such cost increase;

[(ii) the identification of the agency or instrumentality of State government responsible for determining such cost increase; and

[(iii) any other information the institution considers relevant to the report.

[(2) INFORMATION TO THE PUBLIC.— The Secretary shall—

[(A) issue an annual report that summarizes all of the reports by institutions required under paragraph (1) to the authorizing committees; and

[(B) publish such report on the College Navigator website.

[(f) EXEMPTIONS.—

[(1) IN GENERAL.— An institution shall not be placed on a list described in subparagraph (C) or (D) of subsection (c)(1), and shall not be subject to the reporting required under subsection (e), if the dollar amount of the institution's increase in tuition and fees, or net price, as applicable, is less than \$600 for the three-year period described in such subparagraph.

[(2) UPDATE.— Beginning in 2014, and every three years thereafter, the Secretary shall update the dollar amount described in paragraph (1) based on annual increases in inflation, using the Consumer Price Index for each of the three most recent preceding years.

[(g) STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SPENDING CHART.—The Secretary shall annually report on the College Navigator website, in charts for each State, comparisons of—

[(1) the percentage change in spending by such State per full-time equivalent student at all public institutions of higher education in such State, for each of the five most recent preceding academic years;

[(2) the percentage change in tuition and fees for such students for all public institutions of higher education in such State for each of the five most recent preceding academic years; and

[(3) the percentage change in the total amount of need-based aid and merit-based aid provided by such State to full-time students enrolled in the public institutions of higher education in the State for each of the five most recent preceding academic years.]

[(h)] (c) NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—

(1) * * *

* * * * *

(4) *MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NET PRICE CALCULATORS.*—
 Not later than 1 year after the date of the enactment of the
Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act, a net
 price calculator for an institution of higher education shall
 meet the following requirements:

(A) *The link for the calculator shall—*

(i) *be clearly labeled as a net price calculator and prominently, clearly, and conspicuously posted in locations on the website of such institution where information on costs and aid is provided and any other location that the institution considers appropriate; and*

(ii) *match in size and font to the other prominent links on the webpage where the link for the calculator is displayed.*

(B) *The webpage displaying the results for the calculator shall specify at least the following information:*

(i) *The net price (as calculated under subsection (a)(2)) for such institution, which shall be the most visually prominent figure on the results screen.*

(ii) *Cost of attendance, including—*

(I) *tuition and fees;*

(II) *average annual cost of room and board for the institution for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution;*

(III) *average annual cost of books and supplies for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution; and*

(IV) *estimated cost of other expenses (including personal expenses and transportation) for a full-time undergraduate student enrolled in the institution.*

(iii) *Estimated total need-based grant aid and merit-based grant aid from Federal, State, and institutional sources that may be available to a full-time undergraduate student.*

(iv) *Percentage of the full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution that received any type of grant aid described in clause (iii).*

(v) *The disclaimer described in paragraph (6).*

(vi) *In the case of a calculator that—*

(I) *includes questions to estimate the eligibility of a student or prospective student for veterans' education benefits (as defined in section 480) or educational benefits for active duty service members, such benefits are displayed on the results screen in a manner that clearly distinguishes such benefits from the grant aid described in clause (iii); or*

(II) *does not include questions to estimate eligibility for the benefits described in subclause (I), the results screen indicates that certain students (or prospective students) may qualify for such benefits*

and includes a link to information about such benefits.

(C) The institution shall populate the calculator with data from not later than 2 academic years prior to the most recent academic year.

(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF DATA COLLECTED BY THE NET PRICE CALCULATOR.— *A net price calculator for an institution of higher education shall—*

(A) clearly indicate which questions are required to be completed for an estimate of the net price from the calculator;

(B) in the case of a calculator that requests contact information from users, clearly mark such requests as optional and provide for an estimate of the net price from the calculator without requiring users to enter such information; and

(C) prohibit any personally identifiable information provided by users from being sold or made available to third parties.

[(4)] (6) DISCLAIMER.— *Estimates of an individual net price determined using a net price calculator required under paragraph (3) shall be accompanied by a clear and conspicuous notice—*

*(A) * * **

** * * * **

[(i) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

[(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION INFORMATION.— *Not later than one year after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the Secretary shall make publicly available on the College Navigator website, in simple and understandable terms, the following information about each institution of higher education that participates in programs under title IV, for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data are available:*

[(A)] *A statement of the institution’s mission.*

[(B)] *The total number of undergraduate students who applied to, were admitted by, and enrolled in the institution.*

[(C)] *For institutions that require SAT or ACT scores to be submitted, the reading, writing, mathematics, and combined scores on the SAT or ACT, as applicable, for the middle 50 percent range of the institution’s freshman class.*

[(D)] *The number of first-time, full-time, and part-time students enrolled at the institution, at the undergraduate and (if applicable) graduate levels.*

[(E)] *The number of degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who have transferred from another institution.*

[(F)] *The percentages of male and female undergraduate students enrolled at the institution.*

[(G)] *Of the first-time, full-time, degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution—*

【(i) the percentage of such students who are from the State in which the institution is located;

【(ii) the percentage of such students who are from other States; and

【(iii) the percentage of such students who are international students.

【(H) The percentages of first-time, full-time, degree- or certificate-seeking students enrolled at the institution, disaggregated by race and ethnic background.

【(I) The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who are formally registered with the office of disability services of the institution (or the equivalent office) as students with disabilities, except that if such percentage is three percent or less, the institution shall report “three percent or less”.

【(J) The percentages of first-time, full-time, degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who obtain a degree or certificate within—

【(i) the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the student’s program;

【(ii) 150 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the student’s program; and

【(iii) 200 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the student’s program;

【(K) The number of certificates, associate degrees, baccalaureate degrees, master’s degrees, professional degrees, and doctoral degrees awarded by the institution.

【(L) The undergraduate major areas of study at the institution with the highest number of degrees awarded.

【(M) The student-faculty ratio, the number of full-time and part-time faculty, and the number of graduate assistants with primarily instructional responsibilities, at the institution.

【(N)(i) The cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live on campus;

【(ii) the cost of attendance for first-time, full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live off campus; and

【(iii) in the case of a public institution of higher education and notwithstanding subsection (b)(1), the costs described in clauses (i) and (ii), for—

【(I) first-time, full-time students enrolled in the institution who are residents of the State in which the institution is located; and

【(II) first-time, full-time students enrolled in the institution who are not residents of such State.

【(O) The average annual grant amount (including Federal, State, and institutional aid) awarded to a first-time, full-time undergraduate student enrolled at the institution who receives financial aid.

【(P) The average annual amount of Federal student loans provided through the institution to undergraduate students enrolled at the institution.

[(Q) The total annual grant aid awarded to undergraduate students enrolled at the institution, from the Federal Government, a State, the institution, and other sources known by the institution.

[(R) The percentage of first-time, full-time undergraduate students enrolled at the institution receiving Federal, State, and institutional grants, student loans, and any other type of student financial assistance known by the institution, provided publicly or through the institution, such as Federal work-study funds.

[(S) The number of students enrolled at the institution receiving Federal Pell Grants.

[(T) The institution's cohort default rate, as defined under section 435(m).

[(U) The information on campus safety required to be collected under section 485(i).

[(V) A link to the institution's website that provides, in an easily accessible manner, the following information:

[(i) Student activities offered by the institution.

[(ii) Services offered by the institution for individuals with disabilities.

[(iii) Career and placement services offered by the institution to students during and after enrollment.

[(iv) Policies of the institution related to transfer of credit from other institutions.

[(W) A link to the appropriate section of the Bureau of Labor Statistics website that provides information on regional data on starting salaries in all major occupations.

[(X) Information required to be submitted under paragraph (4) and a link to the institution pricing summary page described in paragraph (5).

[(Y) In the case of an institution that was required to submit a report under subsection (e)(1), a link to such report.

[(Z) The availability of alternative tuition plans, which may include guaranteed tuition plans.

[(2) ANNUAL UPDATES.— The Secretary shall annually update the information described in paragraph (1) on the College Navigator website.

[(3) CONSULTATION.— The Secretary shall regularly consult with current and prospective college students, family members of such students, institutions of higher education, and other experts to improve the usefulness and relevance of the College Navigator website, with respect to the presentation of the consumer information collected in paragraph (1).

[(4) DATA COLLECTION.— The Commissioner for Education Statistics shall continue to update and improve the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (referred to in this section as "IPEDS"), including the reporting of information by institutions and the timeliness of the data collected.

[(5) INSTITUTION PRICING SUMMARY PAGE.—

[(A) AVAILABILITY OF LIST OF PARTICIPATING INSTITUTIONS.— The Secretary shall make publicly available on the College Navigator website in a sortable and searchable format a list of all institutions of higher education that

participate in programs under title IV, which list shall, for each institution, include the following:

[(i) The tuition and fees for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available.

[(ii) The net price for each of the three most recent available academic years for which data are available.

[(iii)(I) During the period beginning July 1, 2010, and ending June 30, 2013, the net price for students receiving Federal student financial aid under title IV, disaggregated by the income categories described in paragraph (6), for the most recent academic year for which data are available.

[(II) Beginning July 1, 2013, the net price for students receiving Federal student financial aid under title IV, disaggregated by the income categories described in paragraph (6), for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available.

[(iv) The average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in such institution's tuition and fees for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available.

[(v) The average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in such institution's net price for each of the three most recent preceding academic years for which data are available.

[(vi) A link to the webpage on the College Navigator website that provides the information described in paragraph (1) for the institution.

[(B) ANNUAL UPDATES.— The Secretary shall annually update the lists described in subparagraph (A) on the College Navigator website.

[(6) INCOME CATEGORIES.—

[(A) IN GENERAL.— For purposes of reporting the information required under this subsection, the following income categories shall apply for students who receive Federal student financial aid under title IV:

[(i) \$0–30,000.

[(ii) \$30,001–48,000.

[(iii) \$48,001–75,000.

[(iv) \$75,001–110,000.

[(v) \$110,001 and more.

[(B) ADJUSTMENT.— The Secretary may adjust the income categories listed in subparagraph (A) using the Consumer Price Index if the Secretary determines such adjustment is necessary.]

(d) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION INFORMATION.— *The Secretary shall develop and make publicly available a website to be known as the “College Dashboard website” in accordance with this section and prominently display on such website, in simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data are available, the following information with respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV:*

- (A) *A link to the website of the institution.*
- (B) *An identification of the type of institution as one of the following:*
- (i) *A four-year public institution of higher education.*
 - (ii) *A four-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.*
 - (iii) *A four-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.*
 - (iv) *A two-year public institution of higher education.*
 - (v) *A two-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.*
 - (vi) *A two-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.*
 - (vii) *A less than two-year public institution of higher education.*
 - (viii) *A less than two-year private, nonprofit institution of higher education.*
 - (ix) *A less than two-year private, for-profit institution of higher education.*
- (C) *The number of students enrolled at the institution—*
- (i) *as undergraduate students; and*
 - (ii) *as graduate students, if applicable.*
- (D) *The student-faculty ratio.*
- (E) *The percentage of degree-seeking or certificate-seeking undergraduate students enrolled at the institution who obtain a degree or certificate within—*
- (i) *100 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled;*
 - (ii) *150 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled; and*
 - (iii) *200 percent of the normal time for completion of, or graduation from, the program in which the student is enrolled.*
- (F) *The average net price per year for undergraduate students and a link to the net price calculator for such institution.*
- (G) *The average Federal student loan debt incurred by an undergraduate student who has obtained a certificate or degree from the institution and who borrowed Federal student loans in the course of obtaining such certificate or degree.*
- (H) *A link to national and regional data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on starting salaries in all major occupations.*
- (I) *A link to the webpage of the institution containing campus safety data with respect to such institution.*
- (2) *ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.— The Secretary shall publish on Internet webpages that are linked to through the College Dashboard website for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data is available the following information with respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV:*
- (A) *ENROLLMENT.—*

(i) *The percentages of male and female undergraduate students enrolled at the institution.*

(ii) *The percentages of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution—*

(I) full-time; and

(II) less than full-time.

(iii) *Of the undergraduate students enrolled at the institution—*

(I) the percentage of such students who are from the State in which the institution is located;

(II) the percentage of such students who are from other States; and

(III) the percentage of such students who are international students.

(iv) *The percentages of students enrolled at the institution, disaggregated by—*

(I) race and ethnic background;

(II) classification as a student with a disability;

(III) recipients of a Federal Pell Grant;

(IV) recipients of veterans' education benefits (as defined in section 480); and

(V) recipients of a Federal student loan.

(B) *COMPLETION.— The information required under paragraph (1)(E), disaggregated by—*

(i) recipients of a Federal Pell Grant;

(ii) recipients of a loan made under part D (other than a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan) who did not receive a Federal Pell Grant;

(iii) persons who did not receive a Federal Pell Grant or a loan made under part D (other than a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan);

(iv) race and ethnic background; and

(v) classification as a student with a disability.

(C) *COSTS.—*

(i) The cost of attendance for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live on campus.

(ii) The cost of attendance for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution who live off campus.

(iii) The cost of tuition and fees for full-time undergraduate students enrolled in the institution.

(iv) The cost of tuition and fees per credit hour or credit hour equivalency for undergraduate students enrolled in the institution less than full time.

(v) In the case of a public institution of higher education and notwithstanding subsection (b)(1), the costs described in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

(I) full-time students enrolled in the institution who are residents of the State in which the institution is located; and

(II) full-time students enrolled in the institution who are not residents of such State.

(vi) *The net price for students receiving Federal student financial aid under title IV, disaggregated by the following income categories for such students:*

- (I) *\$0 to \$30,000.*
- (II) *\$30,001 to \$48,000.*
- (III) *\$48,001 to \$75,000.*
- (IV) *\$75,001 to \$110,000.*
- (V) *Over \$110,000.*

(D) *FINANCIAL AID.—*

(i) *The average annual grant amount (including Federal, State, and institutional aid) awarded to an undergraduate student enrolled at the institution who receives financial aid.*

(ii) *The percentage of undergraduate students enrolled at the institution receiving Federal, State, and institutional grants, student loans, and any other type of student financial assistance known by the institution, provided publicly or through the institution, such as Federal work-study funds.*

(iii) *The cohort default rate (as defined in section 435(m)) for such institution.*

(E) *FACULTY INFORMATION.—*

(i) *The ratio of the number of course sections taught by part-time instructors to the number of course sections taught by full-time faculty, disaggregated by course sections intended primarily for undergraduate students and course sections intended primarily for graduate students.*

(ii) *The mean and median years of employment for part-time instructors.*

(3) *OTHER DATA MATTERS.—*

(A) *COMPLETION DATA.— The Commissioner of Education Statistics shall ensure that the information required under paragraph (1)(E) includes information with respect to all students at an institution, including students other than first-time, full-time students, in a manner that the Commissioner considers appropriate.*

(B) *ADJUSTMENT OF INCOME CATEGORIES.— The Secretary may annually adjust the range of each of the income categories described in paragraph (2)(C)(vi) to account for a change in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers as determined by the Bureau of Labor Statistics if the Secretary determines an adjustment is necessary.*

(4) *INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISON.— The Secretary shall include on the College Dashboard website a method for users to easily compare the information required under paragraphs (1) and (2) between institutions.*

(5) *UPDATES.—*

(A) *DATA.— The Secretary shall update the College Dashboard website not less than annually.*

(B) *TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.— The Secretary shall regularly assess the format and technology of the College Dashboard website and make any changes or updates that the Secretary considers appropriate.*

(6) *CONSUMER TESTING.—*

(A) *IN GENERAL.*— In developing and maintaining the College Dashboard website, the Secretary, in consultation with appropriate departments and agencies of the Federal Government, shall conduct consumer testing with appropriate persons, including current and prospective college students, family members of such students, institutions of higher education, and experts, to ensure that the College Dashboard website is usable and easily understandable and provides useful and relevant information to students and families.

(B) *RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHANGES.*— The Secretary shall submit to the authorizing committees any recommendations that the Secretary considers appropriate for changing the information required to be provided on the College Dashboard website under paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the results of the consumer testing conducted under subparagraph (A).

(7) *PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE LINKS TO PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AFTER SUBMISSION OF FAFSA.*— The Secretary shall provide to each student that submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 a link to the webpage of the College Dashboard website that contains the information required under paragraph (1) for each institution of higher education such student includes on such Application.

(8) *INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.*— The Secretary, in consultation with each appropriate head of a department or agency of the Federal Government, shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable that any information related to higher education that is published by such department or agency is consistent with the information published on the College Dashboard website.

(9) *REFERENCES TO COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE.*— Any reference in this Act to the College Navigator website shall be considered a reference to the College Dashboard website.

[(j) *MULTI-YEAR TUITION CALCULATOR.*—

[(1) *DEVELOPMENT OF MULTI-YEAR TUITION CALCULATOR.*— Not later than one year after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the Secretary shall, in consultation with institutions of higher education, financial planners, and other appropriate experts, develop a multi-year tuition calculator to help current and prospective students, families of such students, and other consumers estimate the amount of tuition an individual may pay to attend an institution of higher education in future years.

[(2) *CALCULATION OF MULTI-YEAR TUITION.*— The multi-year tuition calculator described in paragraph (1) shall—

[(A) allow an individual to select an institution of higher education for which the calculation shall be made;

[(B) calculate an estimate of tuition and fees for each year of the normal duration of the program of study at such institution by—

[(i) using the tuition and fees for such institution, as reported under subsection (i)(5)(A)(i), for the most recent academic year for which such data are reported; and

[(ii) determining an estimated annual percentage change for each year for which the calculation is made, based on the annual percentage change in such institution's tuition and fees, as reported under subsection (i)(5)(A)(iv), for the most recent three-year period for which such data are reported;

[(C) calculate an estimate of the total amount of tuition and fees to complete a program of study at such institution, based on the normal duration of such program, using the estimate calculated under subparagraph (B) for each year of the program of study;

[(D) provide the individual with the option to replace the estimated annual percentage change described in subparagraph (B)(ii) with an alternative annual percentage change specified by the individual, and calculate an estimate of tuition and fees for each year and an estimate of the total amount of tuition and fees using the alternative percentage change;

[(E) in the case of an institution that offers a multi-year tuition guarantee program, allow the individual to have the estimates of tuition and fees described in subparagraphs (B) and (C) calculated based on the provisions of such guarantee program for the tuition and fees charged to a student, or cohort of students, enrolled for the duration of the program of study; and

[(F) include any other features or information determined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

[(3) AVAILABILITY AND COMPARISON.— The multi-year tuition calculator described in paragraph (1) shall be available on the College Navigator website and shall allow current and prospective students, families of such students, and consumers to compare information and estimates under this subsection for multiple institutions of higher education.

[(4) DISCLAIMER.— Each calculation of estimated tuition and fees made using the multi-year tuition calculator described in paragraph (1) shall be accompanied by a clear and conspicuous notice—

[(A) stating that the calculation—

[(i) is only an estimate and not a guarantee of the actual amount the student may be charged;

[(ii) is not binding on the Secretary, the institution of higher education, or the State; and

[(iii) may change, subject to the availability of financial assistance, State appropriations, and other factors;

[(B) stating that the student must complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483 in order to be eligible for, and receive, an actual financial aid award that includes Federal grant, loan, or work-study assistance under title IV; and

[(C) including a link to the website of the Department that allows students to access the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483.]

[(k)] (e) STUDENT AID RECIPIENT SURVEY.—

(1) * * *

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【(1) REGULATIONS.—The Secretary is authorized to issue such regulations as may be necessary to carry out this section.】

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MINORITY VIEWS

We support and concur with the Majority views on H.R. 4983. However, student loan debt and skyrocketing college costs are one of the nation's top domestic concerns and the bill fails to address the needs of students and families already facing a mountain of student debt. That is why Democrats offered an amendment, which was rejected by the Majority, to give prospective students vital information on how many graduates from a college are repaying their student loans before they enroll.

An applicant to a college should know whether students who go through a program are able to pay back their loans. Defaulting on a loan is the worst possible outcome for a borrower, however, millions of borrowers can be in a state of limbo where they can avoid default but still not manage to pay down their debts. A repayment metric would give students a more accurate assessment of how successful graduates are in repaying their debts.

Additionally, repayment rates can serve as an important proxy on the success of college programs. Historically, colleges that have extremely low repayment rates are likely to have both unusually high dropout rates and unusually low employment rates, which are clear measures of whether an education program is of quality.

Just last month, the Education Trust issued a report that strongly recommended the use of loan repayment rates as a metric of a program's quality. Here is what they wrote:

Given that the federal role in higher education revolves so heavily around student financial aid and student loans in particular, this makes sense as a minimum quality standard, both from a student perspective and that of the taxpayer. Student loans are by far the riskiest form of federal financial aid.

Students who cannot meet their debt obligations either because they earn a degree with little economic value or because they earn no degree at all will confront life-damaging consequences of bad credit, including the inability to take on future debt—like a home mortgage or a car loan—and possibly even wage and tax garnishment [emphasis added.]

Democrats agree. Students need access to information on program quality so that they can decide for themselves if a program is right for them.

Democrats will continue to work to make college more affordable and accessible, increase oversight and quality assurance of colleges and loan servicers, and to promote new and innovative practices that can reduce student loan debt.

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