

STUDENT FINANCIAL CLARITY ACT OF 2025

JANUARY 21, 2026.—Committed to the Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union and ordered to be printed

Mr. WALBERG, from the Committee on Education and Workforce,
submitted the following

R E P O R T

together with

MINORITY VIEWS

[To accompany H.R. 6498]

The Committee on Education and Workforce, to whom was referred the bill (H.R. 6498) to amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to increase transparency in college tuition for consumers, and for other purposes, having considered the same, reports favorably thereon with an amendment and recommends 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 “Student Financial Clarity Act of 2025”.

SEC. 2. TRANSPARENCY IN COLLEGE TUITION FOR CONSUMERS.

(a) AMENDMENT.—Section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is amended by striking subsections (a) through (j) and inserting the following:

“(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) COLLEGE SCORECARD WEBSITE.—The term ‘College Scorecard website’ means the College Scorecard website required under subsection (b) and includes any successor website.

“(2) COST OF ATTENDANCE.—The term ‘cost of attendance’ has the meaning given such term in section 472(a).

“(3) REQUIRED COSTS.—The term ‘required costs’ means the sum of all the items listed in section 472(a) that are required by an institution of higher education for a program of study for the program length of a program of study, for the time to credential for a student, or for an award year of a program of study, as applicable, including—

“(A) the tuition and fees normally assessed a student enrolled in such program of study carrying the same academic workload, as determined by the institution; and

“(B) in a case in which the institution requires a student to reside in institutionally owned or operated housing or to use institutionally owned or operated food services, the applicable standard allowance for such housing or food services determined by the institution in accordance with section 472(a)(5).

“(4) AMOUNT OF GRANT AND SCHOLARSHIP AID.—The term ‘amount of grant and scholarship aid’ means the sum of all of the grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for the program length of a program of study, for the time to credential for a student, or for an award year of a program of study, as applicable, that a student does not have to repay, including need-based, merit-based, or athletic-based, or another type of grant and scholarship aid, that is—

“(A) offered under title IV;

“(B) offered through other Federal programs;

“(C) offered by the institution;

“(D) offered by a State; or

“(E) offered by any other source.

“(5) NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—

“(A) TOTAL NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—The term ‘total net price required for completion’ means, with respect to a student in a program of study—

“(i) the required costs charged to such student for the program of study for the time to credential; minus

“(ii) the amount of grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for such program for the time to credential.

“(B) ANNUAL NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—The term ‘annual net price required for completion’ means, with respect to a student in a program of study—

“(i) the required costs charged to such student for the program of study for an award year; minus

“(ii) the amount of grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for such program for such award year.

“(6) NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—

“(A) TOTAL NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—The term ‘total net price of attendance’ means, with respect to a student in a program of study, the sum of—

“(i) the total net price required for completion; and

“(ii) the sum, for the time to credential, of all the costs listed in section 472(a) that are not required costs.

“(B) ANNUAL NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—The term ‘annual net price of attendance’ means, with respect to a student in a program of study, the net price of attendance for a specific year of the program of study, determined by disaggregating the total net price of attendance for the student by each year of the student’s time to credential.

“(7) PROGRAM LENGTH.—The term ‘program length’ means the minimum amount of time in weeks, months, or years that is specified in the catalog, marketing materials, or other official publications of an institution of higher education for a full-time student to complete the requirements to obtain the degree or credential awarded for a specific program of study.

“(8) TIME TO CREDENTIAL.—The term ‘time to credential’ means, with respect to a student, the actual amount of time in weeks, months, or years it takes the student to complete the requirements to obtain the degree or credential awarded for a specific program of study.

“(b) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

“(1) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION FOR TITLE IV INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS.—Not later than 18 months after the effective date of this subsection, the Secretary shall make publicly available on the College Scorecard website the following information with respect to students of the institution who have received Federal financial assistance described in paragraph (2)(I), for the most recent award year for which such information is available:

“(A) INSTITUTIONS.—With respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV, the following:

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

“(ii) A link to the Universal Net Price calculator described in subsection (c) and, if applicable, a link to any net price calculator devel-

oped by the institution in accordance with paragraph (7) of such subsection.

“(iii) Information on the type of institution, including predominant and highest credential awarded, research intensity, and programs of study offered.

“(iv) In the case of an institution that requires scores for a college entrance examination (such as the SAT or ACT) to be submitted, data on such submitted scores.

“(v) The acceptance rate, determined by calculating the percentage of individuals who submitted a completed application to the institution who were accepted for enrollment.

“(vi) The institution’s cohort default rate, as defined under section 435(m).

“(vii) A link to the website of the institution containing the information on campus safety required to be collected under section 485(i).

“(B) INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS OF STUDY.—With respect to each such institution and to each program of study at each such institution, the following:

“(i) The geographic location.

“(ii) Information on student enrollment, including the number and percentage of students enrolled full-time, less than full-time, and enrolled in distance education.

“(iii) Information on the number of degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students who have transferred from another institution.

“(iv) Information on student progression and completion, including time to credential and rates of withdrawal, retention, transfer, or completion.

“(v) Information on college costs and financial aid, including—

“(I) the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—

“(aa) the required costs for such award year (determined for an institution based on the required costs for all programs of study);

“(bb) the cost of attendance for such award year (determined for an institution based on the cost of attendance for all programs of study);

“(cc) the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for such award year (determined for an institution based on the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for all programs of study);

“(dd) the information described in item (cc) and subclause (II)(cc), disaggregated—

“(AA) by the type of source described in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of subsection (a)(4); and

“(BB) by whether such aid is need-based, merit-based, or athletic-based, or is another type of aid;

“(II) with respect to students who completed a credential during the most recent award year, the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—

“(aa) the program length (determined for an institution based on the program length for all programs of study);

“(bb) the time to credential (determined for an institution based on the time to credential for all programs of study);

“(cc) the amount of grant and scholarship aid received for the time to credential (determined for an institution based on the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for all programs of study);

“(dd) the total net price required for completion (determined for an institution based on the total net price required for completion for all programs of study); and

“(ee) the total net price required for attendance (determined for an institution based on the total net price required for attendance for all programs of study);

“(III) the number and percentage of students receiving any amount of grant and scholarship aid for such award year, and with respect to students who completed a credential during the most recent award year, the number and percentage of such students receiving any amount of grant and scholarship aid for the time to credential;

“(IV) the average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in the required costs for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available; and

“(V) the average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in the total and annual net price required for completion for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available.

“(vi) Information on student debt and repayment, including—

“(I) the average, median, minimum, and maximum amounts borrowed by students under title IV;

“(II) information with respect to repayment of loans made under title IV, including borrower-based repayment rates, dollar-based repayment rates, and time spent in repayment; and

“(III) the number and percentage of students who—

“(aa) are borrowers of a loan made under title IV;

“(bb) are not borrowers of a loan made under title IV, but have at least one parent who is a borrower of a loan made under title IV on behalf of the student; and

“(cc) are borrowers of a loan made under title IV, and have at least one parent who is a borrower of a loan made under title IV on behalf of the student.

“(vii) Information on the earnings of students, including the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—

“(I) with respect to students who complete a program of study in the most recent award year for which data are available—

“(aa) the annual earnings of such students; and

“(bb) the value-added earnings (as defined in section 481(b)(3)(A)(iv)) of such students; and

“(II) the annual earnings of students who were enrolled in a program of study at the institution during the most recent award year for which data are available, and who at the time the information is reported—

“(aa) have not completed such program of study; and

“(bb) are not enrolled at the institution in any program of study.

“(C) PROGRAMS OF STUDY.—With respect to each program of study at each such institution, the credential awarded for completion of the program of study.

“(2) DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure the information described in paragraph (1) is disaggregated, as applicable, by the following student characteristics:

“(A) Financial circumstances including—

“(i) household income categories, as determined by students’ and families’ adjusted gross income; and

“(ii) student aid index categories, as determined by the Secretary.

“(B) Sex.

“(C) Race and ethnicity.

“(D) Classification as a student with a disability.

“(E) Enrollment status, including part-time or full-time enrollment, and status as a distance education student.

“(F) Status as a first year, second year, third year, or subsequent year student, based on the number of years a student has been enrolled at the institution or in the program of study, as applicable.

“(G) Status as an in-district, in-State, or out-of-State student.

“(H) Status as an international student.

“(I) The type of Federal financial assistance received, including—

“(i) a Pell Grant;

“(ii) a loan made under title IV; and

“(iii) assistance described in section 131(f)(4) administered, sponsored, or supported by the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

“(J) Status as a participant in a program described in section 116(b)(3)(A)(ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141(b)(3)(A)(ii)).

“(3) COMPARISONS; ACCESS; PRIVACY.—The Secretary shall ensure that the College Scorecard website—

“(A) includes a method for users to easily compare institutions and programs, including in a manner that allows for such comparison based on—

- “(i) the institutional and program information described in paragraph (1); and
- “(ii) the student characteristics described in paragraph (2);
- “(B) provides access to information in an electronic and downloadable format; and
- “(C) complies with applicable Federal privacy statutes and uses appropriate statistical disclosure limitation techniques necessary to ensure that the data released to the public cannot be used to identify specific individuals, including with respect to disaggregated information under paragraph (2).
- “(4) ANNUAL UPDATES; ADJUSTMENTS.—
 - “(A) ANNUAL DATA.—The Secretary shall annually update the data on the College Scorecard website required under this subsection.
 - “(B) ADJUSTMENTS.—The Secretary may adjust the data required under subclauses (IV) and (V) of paragraph (1)(B)(v) using the Consumer Price Index if the Secretary determines such adjustment is necessary.
 - “(5) 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.
- “(c) UNIVERSAL NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—
 - “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 18 months after the effective date of this subsection, the Secretary shall establish, on a dedicated website of the Department, a Universal Net Price Calculator that—
 - “(A) allows an individual to select one or more institutions of higher education and one or more programs of study offered by each selected institution for which estimates shall be calculated;
 - “(B) makes available to the individual, with respect to each selected institution and each selected program of study, the individual’s—
 - “(i) annual estimated net price required for completion for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study, based on the average annual net price required for completion for similarly situated students (based on the individual’s information described in subparagraph (C)(iv)) for such institution or program for the most recent award year, adjusted in accordance with clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (C);
 - “(ii) total estimated net price required for completion equal to the sum of the annual estimated net price required for completion for each year described in clause (i);
 - “(iii) annual estimated net price of attendance for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study, based on the average annual net price of attendance for similarly situated students (based on the individual’s information described in subparagraph (C)(iv)) for such institution or program for the most recent award year, adjusted in accordance with clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (C); and
 - “(iv) total estimated net price of attendance equal to the sum of the annual estimated net price of attendance for each year described in clause (iii);
 - “(C) with respect to calculating net price estimates as required by subparagraph (B)—
 - “(i) determines an estimated annual percentage change for each year for which a net price calculation is made, based on the annual percentage change in an institution’s or program’s required costs and other costs under section 472(a), as applicable, for the most recent three-year period for which such data are reported;
 - “(ii) provides the individual with the option to replace the estimated annual percentage change described in clause (i) with an alternative annual percentage change specified by the individual;
 - “(iii) in the case of an institution that offers a multi-year tuition or net price guarantee program, allow the individual to have net price estimates calculated based on the provisions of such guarantee program; and
 - “(iv) uses the individual’s information, based on—
 - “(I) the single set of questions developed by the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (2);
 - “(II) the student-level data elements reported by institutions in accordance with section 668.408 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

“(III) in the case of an individual who submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483, the contents of such application; and

“(IV) any additional information provided by the individual with respect to the individual’s grant and scholarship aid;

“(D) includes a method for users to easily compare institutions and programs; and

“(E) provides access to information in an electronic and downloadable format.

“(2) DEVELOPMENT OF INPUT QUESTIONS.—The Secretary shall develop a single set of questions for purposes of capturing the information specified in subsection (b)(2).

“(3) UPDATES.—

“(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update the data on the Universal Net Price Calculator Website, as required under this subsection, not less than annually.

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

“(4) INTEGRATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES.—In accordance with subsection (d)(5) of section 483, the Secretary shall ensure that a website link or other means of accessing the Universal Net Price Calculator is included on the FAFSA website (or similar successor website).

“(5) 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 Universal Net Price Calculator website.

“(6) CONSUMER TESTING.—In developing and maintaining the College Scorecard website and the Universal Net Price Calculator website, the Secretary, in consultation with each appropriate head of each appropriate department and agency of the Federal Government shall—

“(A) not later than 6 months after the date of the effective date of this subsection, and not less than once every 4 years thereafter, conduct consumer testing with appropriate persons, including current and prospective college students, family members of such students, institutions of higher education, and experts, to—

“(i) improve the usefulness and relevance of the College Scorecard website, with respect to the presentation of the consumer information collected pursuant to subsection (b); and

“(ii) ensure that the Universal Net Price Calculator website is usable and easily understandable and provides useful and relevant information to students and families; and

“(B) display prominently on such websites in simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data is available, the categories of information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b) and paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection that were determined to be useful and relevant to students and families based on the consumer testing described in subparagraph (A).

“(7) USE OF NET PRICE CALCULATOR BY INSTITUTIONS.—Not later than two years after the date on which the Secretary makes the calculator developed under paragraph (1) available to institutions of higher education, each institution of higher education that receives Federal funds under title IV shall make publicly available on the institution’s website a net price calculator to provide to current and prospective students, families, and other consumers a student’s individual net price estimates at such institution of higher education. Such calculator may be a net price calculator developed—

“(A) by the Department pursuant to paragraph (1); or

“(B) by the institution of higher education, if the institution’s calculator includes, at a minimum, the same data elements included in the calculator developed under paragraph (1).

“(8) NOTICE.—A net price estimate calculated for an individual using the Universal Net Price Calculator under this subsection shall be accompanied by a clear and conspicuous notice—

“(A) stating that the estimate—

“(i) does not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance;

“(ii) shall not be binding on the Secretary, an institution of higher education, or a State; and

“(iii) may change;

“(B) stating that an individual 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;

“(C) including a link to the website of the Department that allows individuals to access the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483; and

“(D) explaining that the net price estimate calculated for an individual using the Universal Net Price Calculator under this subsection may differ from the net price calculated for such individual using an institution’s net price calculator due to differences in data or methodology.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—Section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is further amended by redesignating subsections (k) and (l) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively.

SEC. 3. OTHER AMENDMENTS.

(a) COST OF ATTENDANCE OF A PROGRAM OF STUDY.—

(1) DETERMINATION OF COST OF ATTENDANCE OF A PROGRAM OF STUDY.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—Section 472(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087l(a)) is amended—

(i) in paragraph (1), by striking “carrying the same academic workload” and inserting “enrolled in the same program of study and carrying the same academic workload”;

(ii) in paragraph (2), by striking “same course of study” and inserting “same program of study”; and

(iii) in paragraph (14), by striking “program” and inserting “program of study”.

(2) DISCLOSURE.—Section 472(c) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087l(c)) is amended—

(A) by inserting “of each program of study at the institution” after “cost of attendance”; and

(B) by striking “of the institution” and inserting “of such programs of study at the institution”.

(b) PROGRAM OF STUDY DEFINED.—Section 103 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (15) through (24) as paragraphs (16) through (25), respectively; and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (14) the following new paragraph:

“(15) PROGRAM OF STUDY DEFINED.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘program of study’—

“(i) means an eligible program at an institution of higher education that is classified by a combination of—

“(I) one or more CIP codes; and

“(II) one credential level, determined by the credential awarded upon completion of the program; and

“(ii) does not include a program of study abroad.

“(B) CIP CODE.—The term ‘CIP code’ means the six-digit taxonomic identification code assigned by an institution of higher education to a specific program of study at the institution, determined by the institution of higher education in accordance with the Classification of Instructional Programs published by the National Center for Education Statistics.

“(C) CREDENTIAL LEVEL.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘credential level’ means the level of the degree or other credential awarded by an institution of higher education to students who complete a program of study of the institution. Each degree or other credential awarded by an institution shall be categorized by the institution as either undergraduate credential level or graduate credential level.

“(ii) UNDERGRADUATE CREDENTIAL.—When used with respect to a credential or credential level, the term ‘undergraduate credential’ includes credentials such as an undergraduate certificate, an associate degree, a bachelor’s degree, and a post-baccalaureate certificate (including the coursework specified in paragraphs (3)(B) and (4)(B) of section 484(b)).

“(iii) GRADUATE CREDENTIAL.—When used with respect to a credential or credential level, the term ‘graduate credential’ includes credentials such as a master’s degree, a doctoral degree, a professional degree (as defined under section 668.2 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations), and a postgraduate certificate.”.

(c) ELIMINATION OF EARLY ESTIMATOR TOOL.—Paragraph (4) of section 485E(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1092f(b)) is repealed.

(d) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—

(1) HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.—The Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), as amended by this Act, is further amended—

(A) by striking “College Navigator” each place it appears and inserting “College Scorecard”; and

(B) in the header of section 487(d)(3), by striking “COLLEGE NAVIGATOR” and inserting “COLLEGE SCORECARD”.

(2) OTHER REFERENCES.—Any reference in any law (other than the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.)), regulation, document, record, or other paper of the United States to the College Navigator website shall be considered to be a reference to the College Scorecard website.

SEC. 4. EFFECTIVE DATE.

This Act and the amendments made by this Act shall take effect on July 1, 2027, and shall apply with respect to award year 2027–2028 and each subsequent award year, as determined under the Higher Education Act of 1965.

PURPOSE

H.R. 6498, the *Student Financial Clarity Act*, amends the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (HEA) to strengthen transparency and consumer access to information on college costs, financial aid, debt, and outcomes by codifying and expanding the College Scorecard (Scorecard). Specifically, the bill would update and make publicly available institutional and program-level consumer information on the Scorecard, using data from the most recent award year and limited to students who received federal financial assistance. This data would include information such as required costs, grants and scholarships, student debt and repayment, completion rates, and post-enrollment earnings. The bill also requires data to be disaggregated by student characteristics and by average, median, minimum, and maximum values to improve comparability, while still complying with federal privacy laws. Finally, the bill establishes a Universal Net Price Calculator that allows students to receive multi-year cost estimates using student-specific information and past data from previously graduated students of the same institution.

COMMITTEE ACTION

113TH CONGRESS

First Session—Hearings

On April 24, 2013, the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training held a hearing on “Keeping College Within Reach: Enhancing Transparency for Students, Families, and Taxpayers.” The hearing examined efforts to improve higher education transparency, including tools like the College Navigator and College Scorecard, and challenges students face in navigating postsecondary options. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Dr. Donald Heller, Dean, College of Education, Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI; Mr. Alex Garrido, Student, Keiser University, Miami, FL; Dr. Nicole Farmer Hurd, Founder and Executive Director, National College Advising Corps, Carrboro, NC; and Mr. Travis Reindl, Program Director, Postsecondary Education, National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, Washington, D.C.

On November 13, 2013, the Committee on Education and the Workforce held a hearing on “Keeping College Within Reach: Sim-

plifying 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.

118TH CONGRESS

Second Session—Hearings

On April 10, 2024, the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development held a hearing on “FAFSA Fail: Examining the Impact on Students, Families, and Schools.” The purpose of the hearing was to assess the causes and impacts of the failed FAFSA rollout, including the effects of delays and data inaccuracies on students and postsecondary institutions. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Mr. Mark Kantrowitz, President, Cerebly, Inc, York, Skokie, IL; Dr. Justin Draeger, President & CEO, National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators, Washington, D.C.; Ms. Kim Cook, CEO, National College Attainment Network, Washington, D.C.; and Ms. Rachelle Feldman, Vice Provost, Enrollment, University of North Carolina Chapel Hill, Chapel Hill, NC.

On September 24, 2024, the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development held a hearing on “GAO Uncovers Biden-Harris FAFSA Failures.” The purpose of the hearing was to review data and findings from the Government Accountability Office (GAO) on the Department of Education’s implementation of the new FAFSA, with a focus on timelines, technical challenges, and transparency and communication with students, institutions, and taxpayers. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Ms. Melissa Emrey-Arras, Director, Education, Workforce, and Income Security Issues, GAO, Washington, D.C.; and Mrs. Marisol Cruz Cain, Director, Information Technology and Cybersecurity Team, GAO, Washington D.C.

Legislative Action

On January 11, 2024, then-Chairwoman Virginia Foxx introduced H.R. 6951, the *College Cost Reduction Act*, with original cosponsors Representatives Burgess Owens (R-UT), Glenn Grothman (R-WI), Rick W. Allen (R-GA), Lloyd Smucker (R-PA), Lisa McClain (R-MI), Michelle Steel (R-CA), and Brandon Williams (R-NY). On January 31, 2024, the Committee considered H.R. 6951 in a legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a recorded vote of 22–19. The Committee considered the following amendments to H.R. 6951:

1. Representative Owens offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that made technical changes to the text. The amendment was adopted by voice vote.
2. Representative Jahana Hayes (D-CT) offered an amendment to increase the total maximum Pell Grant amount award-

ed during the 2025–2026 award year from \$7,395 to \$10,000 and increase it incrementally thereafter. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #1, which failed by a roll call vote of 17–22.

3. Representative Hayes offered an amendment to strike the bill’s accreditation provisions. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #2, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

4. Representative Hayes offered an amendment to provide federal student loan forgiveness for teachers. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

5. Representative Haley Stevens (D–MI) offered an amendment to make post baccalaureate students eligible to receive a Pell Grant. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #1, which failed by a roll call vote of 17–22.

6. Representative Mark DeSaulnier (D–CA) offered an amendment to increase the total number of semesters a student can be eligible for Pell Grants from 12 to 18. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #1, which failed by a roll call vote of 17–22.

7. Representative Joe Courtney (D–CT) offered an amendment to expand the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #1, which failed by a roll call vote of 17–22.

8. Representative Frederica Wilson (D–FL) offered an amendment to allow graduate or professional students to be eligible to receive a federal Direct Stafford Loan, excluding graduate medical school, nursing school, veterinary school, or a school located outside the U.S. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #1, which failed by a roll call vote of 17–22.

8. Representative Stevens offered an amendment to stipulate that nothing under the bill can be construed to prevent graduate students from exercising collective bargaining rights under the *National Labor Relations Act*. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #2, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

9. Representative Wilson offered an amendment to strike a provision to repeal regulations related to financial value transparency and gainful employment and stipulate that the Department of Education (Department) would not be permitted to promulgate or enforce any regulation or rules related to the application of the term “gainful employment.” The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

10. Ranking Member Bobby Scott (D–VA) offered an amendment to establish an interest rate equal to the high yield of the 10-year Treasury note auctioned at the final auction prior to June 1, 2025, or 5 percent for new federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford loans, federal Direct Stafford loans, and federal Direct PLUS loans issued on or after July 1, 2025. The amendment also established a new rate for any federal Direct Consolidation Loan. The amendment also authorized the Department to establish programs to refinance federal Direct Loans and eligi-

ble private education loans. The amendment also established guidelines for determining the interest rate for refinanced loans through both programs, which would have been fixed. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

11. Representative Teresa Leger Fernandez (D–NM) offered an amendment to direct the Department, in consultation with the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, Financial Literacy and Education Commission, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS), to establish a personal finance education portal on a centralized and publicly available Department website for federal financial aid. Representative Leger Fernandez subsequently withdrew the amendment.

12. Representative Leger Fernandez offered an amendment to authorize the Department to award grants for tuition-free community college to eligible states and tribal colleges and universities. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #5, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

13. Representative Mark Takano (D–CA) offered an amendment to strike a provision to repeal the 90/10 regulation that caps the percentage of revenue that a for-profit school can receive from federal financial aid sources at 90 percent and stipulate that the other 10 percent of revenue must come from alternative sources. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

14. Representative Takano offered an amendment to add language to stipulate that the bill's provisions would not take effect until the inspectors general of the Departments of Education and Veterans Affairs submit a report to Congress certifying that the bill would not result in fraud or abuse of veteran students. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

15. Representative Alma Adams (D–NC) offered an amendment to stipulate that no claim from a federal student loan could be collected by administrative offset for any payments related to Social Security. It applied to any payments made after the bill's enactment. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

16. Representative Adams offered an amendment to require the Department, a guaranty agency, or an eligible loan holder to remove any adverse item of information related to a loan from a borrower's credit history upon the sale or assignment of a loan after the loan is reported as being in default. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

17. Delegate Gregorio Sablan (D–MP) offered an amendment to establish a program to enable college-bound residents of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to have additional choices to attend higher education institutions. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #5, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

18. Representative Lucy McBath (D–GA) offered an amendment to strike a provision to repeal current regulations related to closed school loan discharges. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

19. Representative Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) offered an amendment to add language to require colleges and universities to accept Individualized Education Programs under the *Individuals with Disabilities Education Act*, or plans describing services or accommodations provided to an individual with a disability pursuant to Section 504 of the *Rehabilitation Act of 1973*, as proper documentation for disability accommodations. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 19–21.

20. Representative Pramila Jayapal (D-WA) offered an amendment to strike a provision that would repeal regulations related to borrower repayment defense. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

21. Representative Jayapal offered an amendment to require the postsecondary student data system to include data on applications received, students accepted, and students placed on the wait list disaggregated by race and ethnic subgroup at each institution of higher education (IHE). The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #5, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

22. Representative Jayapal offered an amendment to require the Department to adjust the median cost of college for a program of study for institutions located in a metropolitan area to account for the higher cost of living. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

23. Representative Ilhan Omar (D-MN) offered an amendment to strike a provision that stipulated that the Department could not issue a proposed rule, final regulation, or exhaustive action to carry out the bill's provisions if it is determined that it would be economically significant or result in a subsidy cost increase. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

24. Representative Omar offered an amendment to authorize a program for the Department to provide grants for a period of 5 years to eligible IHEs to provide childcare services for student parents. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

25. Representative Omar offered an amendment to strike a provision that established annual limits on federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loans, for any period of instruction beginning on or after July 1, 2025, which would not exceed the cost of attendance for an academic year. The amendment also struck the establishment of maximum aggregate student loan amounts professional, graduate, and undergraduate students could receive through such loans. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

26. Representative Omar offered an amendment to strike a provision that established two

repayment plans for federal loans made on or after July 1, 2024, including a standard repayment plan with a fixed monthly repayment amount paid over a fixed period that does not exceed 10 years and a standard repayment assistance plan under the income-driven repayment program. The amendment

was included in amendment En Bloc #3, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

27. Representative Jamaal Bowman (D–NY) offered an amendment to stipulate that nothing in the bill could be construed to require any accreditation agency or association to promulgate a standard that would prohibit IHEs from offering programs of study in any academic subject. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #2, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

28. Representative Bowman offered an amendment to prohibit IHEs from providing preferential treatment in the admissions process for donors and alumni, effective on the first day of the second award year after the bill’s enactment. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #2, which failed by a roll call vote of 18–22.

29. Representative Kathy Manning (D–NC) offered an amendment to strike the amended definition of “third-party server,” which referred to any individual, state, or private for-profit or nonprofit organization that enters into a contract with an IHE to administer any student assistance programs under the bill. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

30. Representative Manning offered an amendment to stipulate that nothing in the bill could be construed to prevent an IHE from providing medically accurate and comprehensive information about sexual and reproductive health services, including contraception. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 20–21.

31. Ranking Member Scott offered an amendment to strike a provision to prohibit the Department from implementing any substantially similar rule, regulation, policy or executive action related to regulations repealed under the bill, including closed school loan discharges, borrower repayment defense, pre-dispute arbitration, false certification, administrative capability, certification procedures, ability to benefit, and personal liability. The amendment was included in amendment En Bloc #4, which failed by a roll call vote of 19–22.

119TH CONGRESS

First Session—Hearings

On September 16, 2025, the Committee’s Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee held a hearing on “No More Surprises: Reforming College Pricing for Students and Families.” The purpose of the hearing was to examine ways to make college costs more transparent. Testifying before the Subcommittee were Mr. Justin Draeger, Senior Vice President, Affordability, Strada Education Foundation, Washington, D.C.; Mr. Lee Wishing III, Vice President for Student Recruitment and Chief Marketing Officer, Grove City College, Grove City, PA; Ms. Amy Laitinen, Senior Director of Higher Education, New America, Washington, D.C.; and Dr. Andrew Gillen, Research Fellow, Cato Institute, Washington, D.C.

Legislative Action

On December 9, 2025, Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY) introduced the *Student Financial Aid Clarity Act of 2025* (H.R. 6498). The bill was referred solely to the Committee on Education and Workforce. On December 11, 2025, the Committee considered H.R. 6498 in legislative session and reported it favorably, as amended, to the House of Representatives by a recorded vote of 27–6.¹ The Committee considered the following amendments to H.R. 6498:

1. Representative Bob Onder (R-MO) offered an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute that clarified privacy protections for student data, including clearer language around data collected through college entrance exams. It also standardized how institutions calculate and present costs, program length, time to credential, and grant and scholarship aid across an award year, while making technical updates for clarity and consistency. The amendment passed by voice vote.

2. Representative Takano offered an amendment to codify the Biden administration’s Gainful Employment regulation and financial value transparency regulations for for-profit colleges. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 14–19.

3. Representative Bonamici offered an amendment to prohibit the Secretary of Education from entering into additional Interagency Agreements. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 14–19.

4. Representative Adams offered an amendment that clarified that an individual’s net price estimate may vary between the Universal Net Price Calculator and an institution’s calculator due to differences in underlying data and methodologies. The amendment passed by voice vote.

5. Representative Wilson offered an amendment to prohibit the Secretary of Education from enacting additional Interagency Agreements. The amendment failed by a roll call vote of 14–19.

6. Ranking Member Scott offered an amendment to require additional funding to implement the provisions of the bill. The amendment failed a roll call vote of 14–19.

7. Ranking Member Scott offered an amendment to require a comparison of the amount of federal financial aid a student would have received prior to enactment of Public Law 119–21 with the amount of federal financial aid currently available to that student. The amendment failed by voice vote.

COMMITTEE VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

H.R. 6498, the *Student Financial Clarity Act*, makes improvements to the College Scorecard to provide more information about college costs and student outcomes. It also improves the universal net price calculator tool to allow students to review an institution’s required costs and other cost of attendance data to determine their expected cost over the length of their program.

¹ <https://www.congress.gov/bill/119th-congress/house-bill/6498/all-actions>.

BENEFITS OF PRICE TRANSPARENCY

In traditional economic models, firms operate in competitive markets with a clear, simple goal of maximizing profits. Businesses sell standardized products, compete with many other similar firms, accept whatever price the market dictates, and ensure that price is transparent. These firms make decisions based on costs and revenues, and if they cannot make a profit, they exit the market. Over time, competition drives prices down to the cost of production, ensuring all consumers get the lowest possible price. Economists generally believe that more information increases market efficiency if buyers and sellers make their transaction based on equal knowledge. Economist George A. Akerlof's paper on "lemons" in the used car business showed that a lack of information created uncertainty about quality in the market, which resulted in buyers thinking all used cars are lemons and not buying even high-quality used cars.² Congress took action on car sales when the *Automobile Information Disclosure Act of 1958* was passed, creating what is now known as the "Monroney sticker."³ This tag includes consumer information like the manufacturer's suggested retail price, accessories, gas mileage, safety rating, delivery fees, and more.⁴

CURRENT CONSUMER INFORMATION

While postsecondary education does not have a "Monroney sticker," there are some existing tools designed to help students be informed consumers about the cost of college.

Statutory Requirements

Under section 485 of the HEA, IHEs that participate in federal student aid programs are required to disclose specific institutional and financial assistance information to students and prospective students.⁵ Institutions must disclose the types of financial aid available, the methods and requirements for applying, and the rights and responsibilities of students receiving aid.⁶ They must provide an accurate description of the cost of attendance, including tuition and fees, books and supplies, estimates of room and board or commuting costs, and any additional program-specific expenses.⁷

Section 472 of the HEA requires cost of attendance to reflect both direct costs, such as charges billed by the institution, and indirect costs, such as transportation and personal expenses.⁸

Section 132 of the HEA requires institutions to provide a net price calculator on their websites.⁹ Institutions may use a calculator developed by the Department or may customize and build their own based on a list of requirements. Net price calculators use institutional data to give current and prospective students and their families an estimate of the net price of attendance, defined as the cost of attendance minus grant and scholarship aid, based on individual circumstances and historical data from similar stu-

² <https://www.jstor.org/stable/1879431>.

³ <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?path=/prelim@title15/chapter28&edition=prelim>.

⁴ <https://www.caranddriver.com/research/a31482404/monroney-sticker/>.

⁵ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1092>.

⁶ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1092>.

⁷ <https://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/text/20/1092>.

⁸ <https://uscode.house.gov/view.xhtml?req=granuleid:USC-prelim-title20-section10871l&num=0&edition=prelim>.

⁹ <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/resource-center-net-price>.

dents.¹⁰ The calculator must reflect the school’s actual tuition, fees, room and board, and average financial aid awarded, rather than national averages.¹¹ Schools must ensure that all required input and output elements are included and that the tool is easy to find, user-friendly, and fully functional on their website. They are also responsible for including appropriate disclaimers indicating that the estimates are approximations and may vary based on individual circumstances.¹²

Financial Value Transparency

In October 2023, the Biden administration released new regulations known as Financial Value Transparency.¹³ These regulatory requirements apply to all programs receiving federal student aid. These regulations establish two measures: the debt-to-earnings measure and the earnings premium measure. The regulations also establish performance benchmarks for each measure to determine whether the program may have adverse financial consequences for students. The regulations require institutions to annually report two types of data to the Department: program-specific information and student-specific information. Institutions must provide this information for each eligible program if they have any program with a total of at least 30 completers over the four most recently completed award years within any group of substantially similar programs. “Substantially similar” is defined as all programs in the same four-digit Classification of Instructional Programs code at an institution.¹⁴

Program level reporting includes, among other things, program length, credential level, and number of students. Student level reporting includes date enrolled, cost of attendance (split by such things as housing, food, books, and supplies), tuition and fees, institutional aid, other non-federal aid, and private loans.¹⁵

The Department will use administrative data from the National Student Loan Data System (NSLDS) to compile a draft list of completers to use for creating the cohorts for obtaining earnings data and identify completers. The list will be provided to institutions, which can issue corrections to their data in NSLDS, before the Department submits the information to a federal agency that holds earnings data (currently the IRS). Once the Department has received median annual earnings data for programs, those amounts will be used in calculating debt-to-earnings rates and the earnings premium measure.

Institutions pushed back heavily on these requirements and also indicated many inaccuracies in early forms of the completer lists. This pushback and issues with the FAFSA rollout and completer

¹⁰ <https://studentaid.gov/help-center/answers/article/what-does-net-price-mean-for-college-costs>.

¹¹ https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/netpricecalculator/wwwroot/documents/NetPriceCalculator_QuickStartGuide.pdf.

¹² https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/netpricecalculator/wwwroot/documents/NetPriceCalculator_QuickStartGuide.pdf.

¹³ <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2023/10/10/2023-20385/financial-value-transparency-and-gainful-employment>.

¹⁴ <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/dear-colleague-letters/2024-03-29/regulatory-requirements-financial-value-transparency-and-gainful-employment-updated-sept-16-2024>.

¹⁵ <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2024-04-12/nslds-professional-access-nslds-financial-value-transparency-and-gainful-employment-reports-updated-dec-13-2024>.

lists delayed reporting until October 1, 2025.¹⁶ The original timeline was July 2024.¹⁷

The Trump administration has indicated it will maintain this regulation in some form.¹⁸ In May 2025 the administration chose to file a brief to defend this regulation from a Biden-era lawsuit brought by cosmetology schools.¹⁹ Additionally, Preston Cooper from the American Enterprise Institute supported this regulation because of the goal of price transparency, saying it was the one Biden administration education policy the Trump administration should keep.²⁰

College Scorecard

The College Scorecard (Scorecard) was a tool announced by President Obama in 2013.²¹ The goal was to provide indicators and data on colleges such as graduation rates, employment earnings, and debt. The tool was launched in 2015.²² Functionally, the Scorecard collects data reported by institutions, data on federal financial aid, and tax information.²³ This information applies only to students who received federal grants and loans and must comply with federal privacy laws.²⁴

Presidential administrations across both parties have continued to update and maintain the Scorecard. In 2017, the first Trump administration allowed students to compare data from multiple institutions.²⁵ Later in 2019, the Scorecard was updated with data based on individual programs of study.²⁶ The Biden administration also made changes to the Scorecard to include updated demographic data, graduate data, and better earnings measurements.²⁷

PROBLEMS WITH COLLEGE PRICING

Warped Economic Model

Despite these statutory requirements and gradual consumer tool improvements, college pricing remains opaque and confusing. One difficulty is that the product—a college diploma—is what is known by economists as an “experience good.” Unlike a cell phone or a home, the quality of an experience good cannot be determined by buyers prior to its purchase. Indeed, evaluating whether investing in college is financially “worth it” is only possible after a family has paid their final tuition bill. A model explaining the prices of prod-

¹⁶ <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/library/electronic-announcements/2025-07-09/reminder-fvt-ge-required-reporting-2025-cycle>.

¹⁷ <https://www.highereddive.com/news/gainful-employment-financial-value-transparency-reporting-delay/740685/>.

¹⁸ <https://www.thompsoncoburn.com/insights/trumps-education-department-shocks-with-support-of-bidens-financial-value-transparency-and-gainful-employment-rule/>.

¹⁹ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/quick-takes/2025/05/19/education-dept-urges-judge-uphold-gainful-employment-rule>.

²⁰ <https://www.aei.org/education/the-one-biden-education-policy-trump-should-keep/>.

²¹ <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/blog/2013/02/13/obama-administration-launches-college-scorecard>.

²² <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2015/09/12/weekly-address-new-college-scorecard>.

²³ <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/assets/InstitutionDataDocumentation.pdf>.

²⁴ <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/assets/InstitutionDataDocumentation.pdf>.

²⁵ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2017/09/29/education-dept-updates-higher-ed-consumer-tool-adds-new-comparison-feature>.

²⁶ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2019/05/22/trump-administration-releases-new-program-level-loan-data>.

²⁷ <https://www.thirdway.org/blog/new-wins-for-the-college-scorecard>.

ucts sold at your local supermarket cannot determine the market for postsecondary education.²⁸

Additionally, the vast majority of institutions are nonprofits and thus, by definition, do not operate under the profit-maximization imperative of traditional firms. Instead, colleges seek to enhance their institutional reputation and prestige (e.g., improved college rankings, championship athletics, esteemed faculty, highly rated students) and, in the absence of the need to minimize cost, virtually no limit to the amount an institution will spend in pursuit of this goal exists.

The market for higher education also differs from the normal economic model in that it is heavily subsidized by the public. Through a combination of grants, loans, state appropriations, and private sources, annual support for postsecondary education easily surpasses a quarter of a trillion dollars.²⁹ Taken together, these unique factors have significant implications for the prices students and families face in the higher education market.

Price Confusion

Colleges provide students a variety of prices that can cause students to overestimate or underestimate what attending will truly cost. Colleges will publish a “sticker price” but then use a practice known as “tuition discounting” to then charge a lower price to some students. This creates a lower “net price” after the discount but a more complicated path for students to determine what they truly will pay.³⁰ The high sticker price creates a perception of high worth, and a simultaneously high “scholarship” gives the perception of value.³¹ Tuition discounting is widespread, with over 55 percent of private nonprofit colleges engaging in the practice.³² Upcoming research from Higher Ed Insight also shows that public four-year institutions are increasingly adopting this tuition discount model.³³ This also allows institutions to use tuition discounting games to deceptively charge students different amounts. As Dr. Lee Wishing, President of Grove City College, testified in front of this committee:

“A university sets its tuition at a sticker price of \$65,000, but its actual cost to educate a student is only \$35,000. Therefore, it can give every student a \$30,000 scholarship without losing any money. Everyone is a winner! But what happens to the student who receives a smaller \$20,000 scholarship? That student will pay \$45,000, which is \$10,000 more than the school’s breakeven cost . . . the scheme seeks to make the subsidizers feel good about

²⁸ <https://aaronhedlund.github.io/research/hetero.pdf>.

²⁹ https://www.hanoverresearch.com/reports-and-briefs/higher-education/2025-trends-in-higher-education/?tm=tt&ap=gads&aaid=adaFTiRMzQBWb&kw=&cpn=20970493114&utm_term=&utm_campaign=he-general&utm_source=google&utm_medium=paid-search&hsa_acc=3558395466&hsa_cam=20970493114&hsa_grp=&hsa_ad=&hsa_src=x&hsa_tgt=&hsa_kw=&hsa_mt=&hsa_net=adwords&hsa_ver=3&gad_source=1&gad_campaignid=20960777277&gbraid=0AAAAADJwHY51Kz3A5eoc1QPovkMozSak&gclid=CjwKCAjwiY_GBhBEEiwAFaghvsGwhxPVb_8pXYyyIKtCj4sckBriDUpXdZYIKSPtSIndQBIHbcSsBoC71wQAvD_BwE

³⁰ <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/get-started/focus-on-net-price-not-sticker-price>.

³¹ <https://www.highereddive.com/news/college-tuition-sticker-price-discounting-revenue/721847/>.

³² <https://www.highereddive.com/news/tuition-discounts-private-colleges-nacubo/716115/>.

³³ https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/justin_draeger_testimony_final.pdf.

their unwitting overpayment. The goal: Nearly every student gets a trophy and feels happy.”³⁴

The high sticker prices and confusing discounting math can result in students overestimating college prices. Research by the Strada Foundation found that only 25 percent of adults could correctly identify average tuition and fees at a community college, and 56 percent of adults overestimated the costs at four-year in-state public institutions.³⁵ This overestimation can result in low-income students not even applying at all.³⁶

On the other hand, underestimating college costs can also provide serious negative effects for students. A 2022 report from GAO found that 91 percent of colleges failed to follow best pricing practices in their financial aid offers to students.³⁷ Forty-one percent of colleges did not estimate the net price, and 50 percent of colleges understated the net price by excluding key costs and/or factoring in loans.³⁸ Some colleges included loans as “student aid,” potentially confusing students into thinking loans were grants that would not have to be repaid.³⁹

Encouragingly, a coalition of national higher education associations launched the College Cost Transparency Initiative (CCTI) as a voluntary effort to improve the clarity and consistency of college financial aid offers.⁴⁰ Institutions participating in the CCTI commit to a set of Principles and Standards that promote transparency and accuracy in communicating college costs and aid options.⁴¹ Although the CCTI is a great first step for institutions, participation in the CCTI is voluntary, with over half of all institutions not yet joining.⁴²

Students can also encounter unexpected costs if colleges present confusing calculations about cost of attendance categories. According to the 2025–2026 Federal Student Aid Handbook, each school is responsible for determining the “appropriate and reasonable amounts” to include for each cost of attendance category such as housing, transportation, or food.⁴³ Cost of attendance numbers are “the cornerstone of establishing a student’s financial need” because they factor into a student’s financial aid package and how a student anticipates their costs.⁴⁴ Unfortunately, improper calculations or presentations can be confusing to students if schools’ numbers are not aligned with reality or schools include costs that are not relevant to students. Colleges can sometimes use outdated data for calculations, resulting in fluctuating costs for students.⁴⁵ For example, multiple schools in the same New York City geographic area offered very different housing calculations to students, ranging from \$21,000 to \$4,000.⁴⁶

³⁴ https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/lee_wishing_testimony_final.pdf.

³⁵ https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/justin_draeger_testimony_final.pdf.

³⁶ <https://direct.mit.edu/edfp/article/18/3/365/109282/Do-College-Applicants-Respond-to-Changes-in>.

³⁷ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-104708>.

³⁸ <https://www.gao.gov/products/gao-23-104708>.

³⁹ <https://www.gao.gov/blog/what-financial-aid-offers-dont-tell-you-about-cost-college>.

⁴⁰ <https://www.collegeprice.org/about>.

⁴¹ <https://www.collegeprice.org/standards>.

⁴² https://www.collegeprice.org/partner_institutions.

⁴³ <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/fsa-handbook/2025-2026>.

⁴⁴ <https://fsapartners.ed.gov/knowledge-center/fsa-handbook/2025-2026>.

⁴⁵ https://hope.temple.edu/sites/hope/files/media/document/CostOfAttendance_2024.pdf.

⁴⁶ <https://www.cato.org/commentary/median-cost-attendance-great-idea#>.

College costs, particularly unexpected increases in costs, can prevent many students from graduating. A 2025 Gallup-Lumina poll found that 31 percent of currently enrolled students have considered leaving due to college costs.⁴⁷ Eighty-five percent of adults who either never enrolled or left college pointed to cost as the reason.⁴⁸

Leaving postsecondary education without graduating causes what is known as “some college no credential” (SCNC). A 2025 report from the National Student Clearinghouse Research Center found that the SCNC population increased by over 2 million students between the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 academic years.⁴⁹ There are now an estimated 43 million students in the SCNC population.⁵⁰ SCNC is not ideal for the student; it means that the student spent some amount of time and money but has nothing tangible in the form of a credential to showcase any skills gained. A 2024 Pew Research Study found that nearly 60 percent of SCNC students who borrowed loans ended up defaulting on those loans.⁵¹

Low Public Trust in Costs

Concerns and perceptions about college costs result in low levels of trust and confidence in higher education. A 2025 poll by College Consensus found that 56 percent of Americans who have low levels of trust in higher education point to “high costs and debt” as the reason.⁵² A 2025 Pew Research Survey found that 70 percent of Americans say that the higher education system in the United States is going in the wrong direction, with nearly 80 percent of Americans saying colleges are doing a “fair/poor” job of “keeping tuition costs affordable.”⁵³ A 2025 Politico Poll revealed only 25 percent of Americans say that college is “worth the money”; shockingly, 60 percent of college *graduates* did not think college was worth the cost.⁵⁴ Poll after poll reveals that “affordability of higher education” is high on the priority list for families and students.⁵⁵ As Brookings Fellow Phillip Levin states, “We cannot expect students to make sound decisions regarding educational investments if they do not understand how much college will actually cost them.”⁵⁶

CONCLUSION

Students and families face significant challenges understanding and comparing the true cost and value of higher education. College pricing information is often inconsistent, difficult to compare across institutions and programs, and unclear about total costs, debt, and

⁴⁷ https://www.nasfaa.org/news-item/34147/Report_The_Biggest_Barriers_to_Higher_Ed_Enrollment_Are_Cost_and_Lack_of_Financial_Aid.

⁴⁸ https://www.nasfaa.org/news-item/34147/Report_The_Biggest_Barriers_to_Higher_Ed_Enrollment_Are_Cost_and_Lack_of_Financial_Aid.

⁴⁹ <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/students/retention/2025/06/04/21m-students-left-higher-ed-without-degree-last-year>.

⁵⁰ <https://nscresearchcenter.org/some-college-no-credential/>.

⁵¹ <https://www.pew.org/en/research-and-analysis/articles/2024/01/30/borrowers-with-certain-educational-experiences-appear-more-likely-to-default>.

⁵² <https://www.collegeconsensus.com/research/trust-in-higher-education/>.

⁵³ <https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2025/10/15/growing-share-of-americans-say-the-us-higher-education-system-is-headed-in-the-wrong-direction/>.

⁵⁴ <https://www.politico.com/newsletters/weekly-education/2025/12/01/why-americans-say-college-isnt-worth-the-cost-00671162>.

⁵⁵ <https://www.ncsl.org/education/the-ncsl-task-force-on-higher-education-final-report-in-brief>.

⁵⁶ <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/ignore-the-sticker-price-how-have-college-prices-really-changed/>.

outcomes, making it harder for students to make informed enrollment decisions. The *Student Financial Clarity Act* codifies the Scorecard tool to ensure students have clear, consistent, and reliable access to information on college costs, financial aid, completion, debt, and earnings. Having standardized, program-level data available will allow students and families to compare colleges based on price, time to credential, and outcomes. Greater transparency encourages competition among institutions, helps curb unexpected costs and borrowing, and strengthens accountability for student outcomes.

SECTION-BY-SECTION SUMMARY

Section 1—Short title

- Student Financial Clarity Act

Section 2—Consumer information

- Unless otherwise noted, the provisions below amend section 132 of HEA.
 - No later than 18 months after enactment, the Secretary shall make institutional information publicly available on the College Scorecard website subject to the following requirements:
 - Must comply with applicable federal privacy statutes
 - Must only include students who have received federal financial assistance
 - Must be for the most recent award year with available information
 - The consumer information must include the following institutional data:
 - A link to the institution's website
 - A link to the Universal Net Price Calculator and, if applicable, any net price calculator developed by the institution
 - Information on the type of institution
 - Subject matter scores and combined scores for college entrance exams (such as the SAT/ACT)
 - Acceptance rate (percentage of individuals who submitted a completed application who were accepted for enrollment)
 - Institution's cohort default rate
 - A link to the institution's website containing campus safety information
 - The consumer information must include the following institutional and program of study data:
 - Geographic location
 - Information on student enrollment
 - Information on number of undergraduates who have transferred from another institution
 - Information on student progression and completion
 - Information on college costs and financial aid, including:

- Average, median, minimum, and maximum values of:
 - Required costs for such award year
 - Cost of attendance for such award year
 - Amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for such award year, disaggregated by source and by need-based, merit-based, athletic-based or another type.
- Average, median, minimum, and maximum values for students who completed a credential (during the most recent award year) of the following: Program length, Time to credential, Amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for the time to credential, Total net price for completion, and Total net price required for attendance
 - Number and percentage of students receiving any grant and scholarship aid for such award year
 - For students who completed a credential (during the most recent award year), the number and percentage of said students receiving any grant and scholarship aid
 - Average annual percentage change and dollar change in the required costs for the three most recent academic years
 - Average annual percentage change and dollar change in net price required for completion for the three most recent academic years
- Information on student debt and repayment, including:
 - Average, median, minimum, and maximum amounts borrowed by students until title IV
 - Information on repayment of loans made under Title IV
 - Number and percentage of students who:
 - Are borrowers of a loan under Title IV
 - Are not borrowers of a loan under Title IV but have at least one parent who is a borrower under Title IV on behalf of the student
 - Are both borrowers of a loan under Title IV and have a parent who is a borrower under Title IV of the student
- Information on the earnings of students (both those who have and have not completed), including value-added earnings of students who have completed their program
 - Information on the credential awarded by each program of study
- Disaggregated Information
 - Information above must be disaggregated by the following information: financial circumstances, sex, race and ethnicity, disability, enrollment status, year of enrollment, in-state vs out of state student, international student, and type of federal aid being received (including aid from VA or DOD or DOL).

- Access, Comparisons, and Privacy: College Scorecard website must have the following:
 - A method for users to compare institutions and programs by institutional and program information and by disaggregated student characteristics
 - Access to information in an electronic and downloadable format
 - Privacy protections in accordance with applicable privacy statutes and appropriate statistical disclosure limitation techniques to protect personally identifiable information
- Requires the Secretary to annually update the data on the College Scorecard
- Requires the Secretary to update Data Collection and improve the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System, including the reporting of information by institutions and the timeliness of the data
- Universal Net Price Calculator
 - Not later than 18 months after enactment, the Secretary shall establish a Universal Net Price Calculator that
 - Allows an individual to select and compare multiple institutions and programs of study for estimates
 - Provides the individual the following information, using information from similarly situated students (based on an individual's information provided) for the most recent award year:
 - Annual estimated net price required for completion for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study
 - Total estimated net price required for completion (sum of each annual estimated net price required for completion for each year of the program)
 - Annual estimated net price of attendance for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study
 - Total estimated net price of attendance (sum of each annual estimated net price of attendance for each year of the program)
 - Calculates net price estimates, with the following:
 - Uses an estimated annual change based on the annual percentage change in an institution's or program's costs for the most recent 3 years
 - Allows an individual the option to replace this estimated annual change with an alternative
 - Allows an individual the option to calculate net price estimates with a multi-year tuition or net price guarantee program, if applicable
 - Uses an individual's information based on
 - Questions developed by the Secretary to capture specific disaggregated student information
 - Student-level data reported by institutions in accordance with the Financial Value Transparency regulation

- A student's FAFSA submission
- Any additional information provided by the individual for an individual's grant and scholarships
- Provides access to information in an electronic and downloadable format
 - Secretary shall update data on the Universal Net Price Calculator not less than annually and regularly assess the format and technology of the Universal Net Price Calculator to make appropriate changes
 - Secretary shall include a link to the Universal Net Price Calculator on the FAFSA website (or similar successor website)
 - Secretary shall consult with each appropriate head of federal departments or agencies to ensure consistent publishing of information
 - Secretary, in consultation with each appropriate head of federal departments or agencies, shall conduct consumer testing
 - Not later than 6 months after the effective date and not less than once every 4 years thereafter
 - With appropriate populations, including current and prospective college students, family members, institutions, and experts
 - To improve the usefulness and relevance of the College Scorecard and Universal Net Price Calculator websites
 - Not later than two years after the Universal Net Price Calculator is developed, institutions must
 - Make the Universal Net Price Calculator publicly available on an institution's website, or
 - Develop an institution's calendar with, at a minimum, the same data elements
 - Estimates calculated by the Universal Net Price Calculator will have a notice that:
 - The estimates are not a final determination of financial assistance, are not legally binding, and may change
 - Individuals must complete the FAFSA to be eligible
 - Includes a link to the FAFSA
 - Explains the net price estimate may differ from the net price offered by an institution's calculator due to different methodology

Section 3—Other amendments

- Amends section 472 to update the cost of attendance definition to factor in different programs of study
- Amends section 103 to define program of study to separate programs by major through the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) code and credential level
- Amends section 485 to eliminate outdated FAFSA early estimator tool
- Amends all language references to College Scorecard

Section 4—Effective date

- Amendments shall take effect July 2027 and apply in award year 2027–2028 and every subsequent year
- Amends all language references to College Scorecard

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

The Committee finds that the legislation does not relate to the terms and conditions of employment or access to public services or accommodations within the meaning of section 102(b)(3) of Public Law 104–1.

UNFUNDED MANDATE STATEMENT

Pursuant to Section 423 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974, Pub. L. No. 93–344 (as amended by Section 101(a)(2) of the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act of 1995, Pub. L. No. 104–4), the Committee traditionally adopts as its own the cost estimate prepared by the Director of the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) pursuant to section 402 of the Congressional Budget and Impoundment Control Act of 1974. The Committee reports that because this cost estimate was not timely submitted to the Committee before the filing of this report, the Committee is not in a position to make a cost estimate for H.R. 6498.

EARMARK STATEMENT

H.R. 6498 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: 12/11/2025

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 4

Bill: H.R. 6498

Amendment Number: 1

Disposition: Not adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (14y-19n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Rep. Takano (CA)

TAKANO_030

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)	X			Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mr. COURNTEY (CT)	X		
Mrs. FOXX (NC)			X	Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Mr. GROTHMAN ² (WI)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA)	X		
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)		X		Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)		X		Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)			X
Mr. OWENS (UT)		X		Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)		X		Ms. HAYES (CT)	X		
Mrs. MILLER (IL)		X		Ms. OMAR (MN)	X		
Ms. LETLOW (LA)		X		Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)		X		Mr. CASAR (TX)			X
Mr. RULLI (OH)		X		Ms. LEE (PA)	X		
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)		X		Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)		X		Ms. GRIJALVA (AZ)	X		
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)		X					
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)		X					
Mr. HARRIS (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSMER (IN)		X					
Mr. FINE (FL)		X					

TOTALS: Ayes: 14

Nos: 19

Not Voting: 4

Total: 37 / Quorum: 35 / Report: Failed

(21 R - 16 D)

Date: 12/11/2025

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 5

Bill: H.R. 6498

Amendment Number: 2

Disposition: Not adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (14y-19n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Rep. Bonamici (OR)

BONAMI_061

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)		X		Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mr. COURNTEY (CT))	X		
Mrs. FOXX (NC)			X	Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA))	X		
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)		X		Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)		X		Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)			X
Mr. OWENS (UT)		X		Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)		X		Ms. HAYES (CT)	X		
Mrs. MILLER (IL)		X		Ms. OMAR (MN)	X		
Ms. LETLOW (LA)		X		Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)		X		Mr. CASAR (TX)			X
Mr. RULLI (OH)		X		Ms. LEE (PA)	X		
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)		X		Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)		X		Ms. GRIJALVA (AZ)	X		
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)		X					
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)		X					
Mr. HARRIS (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSMER (IN)		X					
Mr. FINE (FL)		X					

TOTALS: Ayes: 14

Nos: 19

Not Voting: 4

Total: 37 / Quorum: 35 / Report: Failed

(21 R - 16 D)

Date: 12/11/2025

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 6

Bill: H.R. 6498

Amendment Number: 3

Disposition: Not adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (14y-19n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Rep. Wilson (FL)

WILSFL_061

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)		X		Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mr. COURNTEY (CT))	X		
Mrs. FOXX (NC)			X	Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA))	X		
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)		X		Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)		X		Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)			X
Mr. OWENS (UT)		X		Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)		X		Ms. HAYES (CT)	X		
Mrs. MILLER (IL)		X		Ms. OMAR (MN)	X		
Ms. LETLOW (LA)		X		Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)		X		Mr. CASAR (TX)			X
Mr. RULLI (OH)		X		Ms. LEE (PA)	X		
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)		X		Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)		X		Ms. GRIJALVA (AZ)	X		
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)		X					
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)		X					
Mr. HARRIS (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSMER (IN)		X					
Mr. FINE (FL)		X					

TOTALS: Ayes: 14

Nos: 19

Not Voting: 4

Total: 37 / Quorum: 35 / Report: Failed

(21 R - 16 D)

Date: 12/11/2025

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 7

Bill: H.R. 6498

Amendment Number: 4

Disposition: Not adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (14y-19n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Rep. Scott (VA)

6498_AMD_EFFECTIVEDATE

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)		X		Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)		X		Mr. COURNTEY (CT))	X		
Mrs. FOXX (NC)			X	Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)		X		Ms. BONAMICI (OR)	X		
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)		X		Mr. TAKANO (CA))	X		
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)		X		Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)		X		Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)			X
Mr. OWENS (UT)		X		Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)		X		Ms. HAYES (CT)	X		
Mrs. MILLER (IL)		X		Ms. OMAR (MN)	X		
Ms. LETLOW (LA)		X		Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)		X		Mr. CASAR (TX)			X
Mr. RULLI (OH)		X		Ms. LEE (PA)	X		
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)		X		Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)		X		Ms. GRIJALVA (AZ)	X		
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)		X					
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)		X					
Mr. HARRIS (NC)		X					
Mr. MESSMER (IN)		X					
Mr. FINE (FL)		X					

TOTALS: Ayes: 14

Nos: 19

Not Voting: 4

Total: 37/ Quorum: 35/ Report: Failed

(21 R - 16 D)

Date: 12/11/2025

COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE RECORD OF COMMITTEE VOTE

Roll Call: 8

Bill: H.R. 6498

Amendment Number: N/A

Disposition: Adopted by a Full Committee Roll Call Vote (27y-6n)

Sponsor/Amendment: Motion to Report bill; as amended

Rep. Onder (MO)

Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting	Name & State	Aye	No	Not Voting
Mr. WALBERG (MI) (Chairman)	X			Mr. SCOTT (VA) (Ranking)	X		
Mr. WILSON (SC)	X			Mr. COURNTEY (CT)	X		
Mrs. FOXX (NC)			X	Ms. WILSON (FL)	X		
Mr. THOMPSON (PA)	X			Ms. BONAMICI (OR)		X	
Mr. GROTHMAN (WI)	X			Mr. TAKANO (CA))		X	
Ms. STEFANIK (NY)	X			Ms. ADAMS (NC)	X		
Mr. ALLEN (GA)	X			Mr. DESAULNIER (CA)	X		
Mr. COMER (KY)			X	Mr. NORCROSS (NJ)			X
Mr. OWENS (UT)	X			Ms. MCBATH (GA)	X		
Ms. MCCLAIN (MI)	X			Ms. HAYES (CT)		X	
Mrs. MILLER (IL)	X			Ms. OMAR (MN)		X	
Ms. LETLOW (LA)	X			Ms. STEVENS (MI)	X		
Mr. KILEY (CA)	X			Mr. CASAR (TX)			X
Mr. RULLI (OH)	X			Ms. LEE (PA)		X	
Mr. MOYLAN (GU)	X			Mr. MANNION (NY)	X		
Mr. ONDER (MO)	X			Ms. GRIJALVA (AZ)		X	
Mr. MACKENZIE (PA)	X						
Mr. BAUMGARTNER (WA)	X						
Mr. HARRIS (NC)	X						
Mr. MESSMER (IN)	X						
Mr. FINE (FL)	X						

TOTALS: Ayes: 27

Nos: 6

Not Voting: 4

Total: 37 / Quorum: 35 Report: Passed

(21 R - 16 D)

STATEMENT OF GENERAL PERFORMANCE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

In accordance with clause (3)(c) of rule XIII of the Rules of the House of Representatives, the goal of H.R. 6498 is to strengthen transparency and consumer access to information on college costs, financial aid, debt, and outcomes by codifying and expanding the College Scorecard and Universal Net Price Calculator.

DUPLICATION OF FEDERAL PROGRAMS

No provision of H.R. 6498 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.

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.

REQUIRED COMMITTEE HEARING

In compliance with clause 3(c)(6) of rule XIII the following hearing held during the 119th Congress was used to develop or consider H.R. 6498: On September 16, 2025, the Committee's Higher Education and Workforce Development Subcommittee held a hearing on "No More Surprises, Reforming College Pricing for Students and Families."

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, a cost estimate was not made available to the Committee in time for the filing of this report. The Chairman of the Committee shall cause such estimate to be printed in the Congressional Record upon its receipt by the Committee.

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. 6498. However, clause 3(d)(2)(B) of that rule provides that this requirement does not apply when, as with the present report, the Committee has requested a cost estimate for the bill from the Director of the Congressional Budget Office.

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 italics, and existing law in which no change is proposed is shown in roman):

HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF 1965

* * * * *

TITLE I—GENERAL PROVISIONS**PART A—DEFINITIONS**

* * * * *

SEC. 103. ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) **AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.**—The term “authorizing committees” means the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions of the Senate and the Committee on Education and Labor of the House of Representatives.

(2) **COMBINATION OF INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**—The term “combination of institutions of higher education” means a group of institutions of higher education that have entered into a cooperative arrangement for the purpose of carrying out a common objective, or a public or private nonprofit agency, organization, or institution designated or created by a group of institutions of higher education for the purpose of carrying out a common objective on the group’s behalf.

(3) **CRITICAL FOREIGN LANGUAGE.**—Except as otherwise provided, the term “critical foreign language” means each of the languages contained in the list of critical languages designated by the Secretary in the Federal Register on August 2, 1985 (50 Fed. Reg. 31412; promulgated under the authority of section 212(d) of the Education for Economic Security Act (repealed by section 2303 of the Augustus F. Hawkins-Robert T. Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Amendments of 1988)), as updated by the Secretary from time to time and published in the Federal Register, except that in the implementation of this definition with respect to a specific title, the Secretary may set priorities according to the purposes of such title and the national security, economic competitiveness, and educational needs of the United States.

(4) **DEPARTMENT.**—The term “Department” means the Department of Education.

(5) **DIPLOMA MILL.**—The term “diploma mill” means an entity that—

(A)(i) offers, for a fee, degrees, diplomas, or certificates, that may be used to represent to the general public that the individual possessing such a degree, diploma, or certificate has completed a program of postsecondary education or training; and

(ii) requires such individual to complete little or no education or coursework to obtain such degree, diploma, or certificate; and

(B) lacks accreditation by an accrediting agency or association that is recognized as an accrediting agency or association of institutions of higher education (as such term is defined in section 102) by—

(i) the Secretary pursuant to subpart 2 of part H of title IV; or

(ii) a Federal agency, State government, or other organization or association that recognizes accrediting agencies or associations.

(6) **DISABILITY.**—The term “disability” has the same meaning given that term under section 3(2) of the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1990.

(7) **DISTANCE EDUCATION.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Except as otherwise provided, the term “distance education” means education that uses one or more of the technologies described in subparagraph (B)—

(i) to deliver instruction to students who are separated from the instructor; and

(ii) to support regular and substantive interaction between the students and the instructor, synchronously or asynchronously.

(B) **INCLUSIONS.**—For the purposes of subparagraph (A), the technologies used may include—

(i) the Internet;

(ii) one-way and two-way transmissions through open broadcast, closed circuit, cable, microwave, broadband lines, fiber optics, satellite, or wireless communications devices;

(iii) audio conferencing; or

(iv) video cassettes, DVDs, and CD-ROMs, if the cassettes, DVDs, or CD-ROMs are used in a course in conjunction with any of the technologies listed in clauses (i) through (iii).

(8) **EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION PROGRAM.**—The term “early childhood education program” means—

(A) a Head Start program or an Early Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.), including a migrant or seasonal Head Start program, an Indian Head Start program, or a Head Start program or an Early Head Start program that also receives State funding;

(B) a State licensed or regulated child care program; or

(C) a program that—

(i) serves children from birth through age six that addresses the children’s cognitive (including language, early literacy, and early mathematics), social, emotional, and physical development; and

(ii) is—

(I) a State prekindergarten program;

(II) a program authorized under section 619 or part C of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act; or

(III) a program operated by a local educational agency.

(9) ELEMENTARY SCHOOL.—The term “elementary school” has the same meaning given that term under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(10) GIFTED AND TALENTED.—The term “gifted and talented” has the same meaning given that term under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(11) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—The term “local educational agency” has the same meaning given that term under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

(12) NEW BORROWER.—The term “new borrower” when used with respect to any date means an individual who on that date has no outstanding balance of principal or interest owing on any loan made, insured, or guaranteed under title IV.

(13) NONPROFIT.—The term “nonprofit” as applied to a school, agency, organization, or institution means a school, agency, organization, or institution owned and operated by one or more nonprofit corporations or associations, no part of the net earnings of which inures, or may lawfully inure, to the benefit of any private shareholder or individual.

(14) POVERTY LINE.—The term “poverty line” means the poverty line (as defined in section 673(2) of the Community Services Block Grant Act (42 U.S.C. 9902(2)) applicable to a family of the size involved.

(15) PROGRAM OF STUDY DEFINED.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The term “program of study”—

(i) means an eligible program at an institution of higher education that is classified by a combination of—

(I) one or more CIP codes; and

(II) one credential level, determined by the credential awarded upon completion of the program; and

(ii) does not include a program of study abroad.

(B) CIP CODE.—The term “CIP code” means the six-digit taxonomic identification code assigned by an institution of higher education to a specific program of study at the institution, determined by the institution of higher education in accordance with the Classification of Instructional Programs published by the National Center for Education Statistics.

(C) CREDENTIAL LEVEL.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—The term “credential level” means the level of the degree or other credential awarded by an institution of higher education to students who complete a program of study of the institution. Each degree or other credential awarded by an institution shall be categorized by the institution as either undergraduate credential level or graduate credential level.

(ii) UNDERGRADUATE CREDENTIAL.—When used with respect to a credential or credential level, the term “undergraduate credential” includes credentials such as an undergraduate certificate, an associate degree, a bach-

elor's degree, and a post-baccalaureate certificate (including the coursework specified in paragraphs (3)(B) and (4)(B) of section 484(b)).

(iii) *GRADUATE CREDENTIAL.*—When used with respect to a credential or credential level, the term “graduate credential” includes credentials such as a master’s degree, a doctoral degree, a professional degree (as defined under section 668.2 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations), and a postgraduate certificate.

[(15)] (16) *SCHOOL OR DEPARTMENT OF DIVINITY.*—The term “school or department of divinity” means an institution, or a department or a branch of an institution, the program of instruction of which is designed for the education of students—

(A) to prepare the students to become ministers of religion or to enter upon some other religious vocation (or to provide continuing training for any such vocation); or

(B) to prepare the students to teach theological subjects.

[(16)] (17) *SECONDARY SCHOOL.*—The term “secondary school” has the same meaning given that term under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

[(17)] (18) *SECRETARY.*—The term “Secretary” means the Secretary of Education.

[(18)] (19) *SERVICE-LEARNING.*—The term “service-learning” has the same meaning given that term under section 101(23) of the National and Community Service Act of 1990.

[(19)] (20) *SPECIAL EDUCATION TEACHER.*—The term “special education teacher” means teachers who teach children with disabilities as defined in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

[(20)] (21) *STATE; FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.*—

(A) *STATE.*—The term “State” includes, in addition to the several States of the United States, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia, Guam, American Samoa, the United States Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the Freely Associated States.

(B) *FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.*—The term “Freely Associated States” means the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, and the Republic of Palau.

[(21)] (22) *STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.*—The term “State educational agency” has the same meaning given that term under section 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965.

[(22)] (23) *STATE HIGHER EDUCATION AGENCY.*—The term “State higher education agency” means the officer or agency primarily responsible for the State supervision of higher education.

[(23)] (24) *UNIVERSAL DESIGN.*—The term “universal design” has the meaning given the term in section 3 of the Assistive Technology Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 3002).

[(24)] (25) *UNIVERSAL DESIGN FOR LEARNING.*—The term “universal design for learning” means a scientifically valid framework for guiding educational practice that—

(A) provides flexibility in the ways information is presented, in the ways students respond or demonstrate knowledge and skills, and in the ways students are engaged; and

(B) reduces barriers in instruction, provides appropriate accommodations, supports, and challenges, and maintains high achievement expectations for all students, including students with disabilities and students who are limited English proficient.

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PART C—COST OF HIGHER EDUCATION

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

(a) IMPROVED DATA COLLECTION.—

(1) DEVELOPMENT OF UNIFORM METHODOLOGY.—The Secretary shall direct the Commissioner of Education Statistics to convene a series of forums to develop nationally consistent methodologies for reporting costs incurred by postsecondary institutions in providing postsecondary education.

(2) REDESIGN OF DATA SYSTEMS.—On the basis of the methodologies developed pursuant to paragraph (1), the Secretary shall redesign relevant parts of the postsecondary education data systems to improve the usefulness and timeliness of the data collected by such systems.

(3) INFORMATION TO INSTITUTIONS.—The Commissioner of Education Statistics shall—

(A) develop a standard definition for the following data elements:

(i) tuition and fees for a full-time undergraduate student;

(ii) cost of attendance for a full-time undergraduate student, consistent with the provisions of section 472;

(iii) average amount of financial assistance received by an undergraduate student who attends an institution of higher education, including—

(I) each type of assistance or benefit described in section 428(a)(2)(C)(ii);

(II) fellowships; and

(III) institutional and other assistance; and

(iv) number of students receiving financial assistance described in each of subclauses (I), (II), and (III) of clause (iii);

(B) not later than 90 days after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Amendments of 1998, report the definitions to each institution of higher education and within a reasonable period of time thereafter inform the authorizing committees of those definitions; and

(C) collect information regarding the data elements described in subparagraph (A) with respect to at least all institutions of higher education participating in programs under title IV, beginning with the information from academic year 2000–2001 and annually thereafter.

(b) DATA DISSEMINATION.—The Secretary shall make available the data collected pursuant to subsection (a). Such data shall be available in a form that permits the review and comparison of the data submissions of individual institutions of higher education. Such data shall be presented in a form that is easily understandable and allows parents and students to make informed decisions based on the costs for typical full-time undergraduate students.

(c) STUDY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Commissioner of Education Statistics shall conduct a national study of expenditures at institutions of higher education. Such study shall include information with respect to—

(A) the change in tuition and fees compared with the consumer price index and other appropriate measures of inflation;

(B) faculty salaries and benefits;

(C) administrative salaries, benefits and expenses;

(D) academic support services;

(E) research;

(F) operations and maintenance; and

(G) institutional expenditures for construction and technology and the potential cost of replacing instructional buildings and equipment.

(2) EVALUATION.—The study shall include an evaluation of—

(A) changes over time in the expenditures identified in paragraph (1);

(B) the relationship of the expenditures identified in paragraph (1) to college costs; and

(C) the extent to which increases in institutional financial aid and tuition discounting practices affect tuition increases, including the demographics of students receiving such discounts, the extent to which financial aid is provided to students with limited need in order to attract a student to a particular institution, and the extent to which Federal financial aid, including loan aid, has been used to offset the costs of such practices.

(3) FINAL REPORT.—The Commissioner of Education Statistics shall submit a report regarding the findings of the study required by paragraph (1) to the appropriate committees of Congress not later than September 30, 2002.

(4) HIGHER EDUCATION MARKET BASKET.—The Bureau of Labor Statistics, in consultation with the Commissioner of Education Statistics, shall develop a higher education market basket that identifies the items that comprise the costs of higher education. The Bureau of Labor Statistics shall provide a report on the market basket to the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the Senate and the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives not later than September 30, 2002.

(5) FINES.—In addition to actions authorized in section 487(c), the Secretary may impose a fine in an amount not to exceed \$25,000 on an institution of higher education for failing to provide the information described in paragraph (1) in a timely and accurate manner, or for failing to otherwise cooperate with the National Center for Education Statistics regarding

efforts to obtain data on the cost of higher education under this section and pursuant to the program participation agreement entered into under section 487.

(d) **PROMOTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION FEDERAL STUDENT FINANCIAL AID WEBSITE.**—The Secretary shall display a link to the Federal student financial aid website of the Department in a prominent place on the homepage of the Department’s website.

(e) **ENHANCED STUDENT FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION.**—

(1) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—The Secretary shall continue to improve the usefulness and accessibility of the information provided by the Department on college planning and student financial aid.

(2) **DISSEMINATION.**—The Secretary shall continue to make the availability of the information on the Federal student financial aid website of the Department widely known, through a major media campaign and other forms of communication.

(3) **COORDINATION.**—As a part of the efforts required under this subsection, the Secretary shall create one website accessible from the Department’s website that fulfills the requirements under subsections (b), (f), and (g).

(f) **IMPROVED AVAILABILITY AND COORDINATION OF INFORMATION CONCERNING STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS FOR MILITARY MEMBERS AND VETERANS.**—

(1) **COORDINATION.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall create a searchable website that—

(A) contains information, in simple and understandable terms, about all Federal and State student financial assistance, readmission requirements under section 484C, and other student services, for which members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves), veterans, and the dependents of such members or veterans may be eligible; and

(B) is easily accessible through the website described in subsection (e)(3).

(2) **IMPLEMENTATION.**—Not later than one year after the date of enactment of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, the Secretary shall make publicly available the Armed Forces information website described in paragraph (1).

(3) **DISSEMINATION.**—The Secretary, in coordination with the Secretary of Defense and the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, shall make the availability of the Armed Forces information website described in paragraph (1) widely known to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves), veterans, the dependents of such members or veterans, States, institutions of higher education, and the general public.

(4) **DEFINITION.**—In this subsection, the term “Federal and State student financial assistance” means any grant, loan, work assistance, tuition assistance, scholarship, fellowship, or other form of financial aid for pursuing a postsecondary education that is—

(A) administered, sponsored, or supported by the Department of Education, the Department of Defense, the Department of Veterans Affairs, or a State; and

(B) available to members of the Armed Forces (including members of the National Guard and Reserves), veterans, or the dependents of such members or veterans.

(g) PROMOTION OF AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION CONCERNING OTHER STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS.—

(1) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this subsection, the term “nondepartmental student financial assistance program” means any grant, loan, scholarship, fellowship, or other form of financial aid for students pursuing a postsecondary education that is—

(A) distributed directly to the student or to the student’s account at an institution of higher education; and

(B) operated, sponsored, or supported by a Federal department or agency other than the Department of Education.

(2) AVAILABILITY OF OTHER STUDENT FINANCIAL AID INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure that—

(A) not later than 90 days after the Secretary receives the information required under paragraph (3), the eligibility requirements, application procedures, financial terms and conditions, and other relevant information for each nondepartmental student financial assistance program are searchable and accessible through the Federal student financial aid website in a manner that is simple and understandable for students and the students’ families; and

(B) the website displaying the information described in subparagraph (A) includes a link to the National Database on Financial Assistance for the Study of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics pursuant to paragraph (4), and the information on military benefits under subsection (f), once such Database and information are available.

(3) NONDEPARTMENTAL STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS.—The Secretary shall request all Federal departments and agencies to provide the information described in paragraph (2)(A), and each Federal department or agency shall—

(A) promptly respond to surveys or other requests from the Secretary for the information described in such paragraph; and

(B) identify for the Secretary any nondepartmental student financial assistance program operated, sponsored, or supported by such Federal department or agency.

(4) NATIONAL STEM DATABASE.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall establish and maintain, on the website described in subsection (e)(3), a National Database on Financial Assistance for the Study of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (in this paragraph referred to as the “STEM Database”). The STEM Database shall consist of information on scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of Federal, State, local, and, to the maximum extent practicable, private financial assistance available for the study of science, technology, engineering, or mathematics at the postsecondary and postbaccalaureate levels.

(B) DATABASE CONTENTS.—The information maintained on the STEM Database shall be displayed on the website in the following manner:

(i) SEPARATE INFORMATION.—The STEM Database shall provide separate information for each of the fields of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics, and for postsecondary and postbaccalaureate programs of financial assistance.

(ii) INFORMATION ON TARGETED ASSISTANCE.—The STEM Database shall provide specific information on any program of financial assistance that is targeted to individuals based on financial need, merit, or student characteristics.

(iii) CONTACT AND WEBSITE INFORMATION.—The STEM Database shall provide—

(I) standard contact information that an interested person may use to contact a sponsor of any program of financial assistance included in the STEM Database; and

(II) if such sponsor maintains a public website, a link to the website.

(iv) SEARCH AND MATCH CAPABILITIES.—The STEM Database shall—

(I) have a search capability that permits an individual to search for information on the basis of each category of the information provided through the STEM Database and on the basis of combinations of categories of the information provided, including—

(aa) whether the financial assistance is need- or merit-based; and

(bb) by relevant academic majors; and

(II) have a match capability that—

(aa) searches the STEM Database for all financial assistance opportunities for which an individual may be qualified to apply, based on the student characteristics provided by such individual; and

(bb) provides information to an individual for only those opportunities for which such individual is qualified, based on the student characteristics provided by such individual.

(v) RECOMMENDATION AND DISCLAIMER.—The STEM Database shall provide, to the users of the STEM Database—

(I) a recommendation that students and families should carefully review all of the application requirements prior to applying for any aid or program of student financial assistance; and

(II) a disclaimer that the non-Federal programs of student financial assistance presented in the STEM Database are not provided or endorsed by the Department or the Federal Government.

(C) COMPILATION OF FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE INFORMATION.—In carrying out this paragraph, the Secretary shall—

(i) consult with public and private sources of scholarships, fellowships, and other programs of student financial assistance; and

(ii) make easily available a process for such entities to provide regular and updated information about the scholarships, fellowships, or other programs of student financial assistance.

(D) CONTRACT AUTHORIZED.—In carrying out the requirements of this paragraph, the Secretary is authorized to enter into a contract with a private entity with demonstrated expertise in creating and maintaining databases such as the one required under this paragraph, under which contract the entity shall furnish, and regularly update, all of the information required to be maintained on the STEM Database.

(5) DISSEMINATION OF INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall take such actions, on an ongoing basis, as may be necessary to disseminate information under this subsection and to encourage the use of the information by interested parties, including sending notices to secondary schools and institutions of higher education.

(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 Scorecard* website (or successor website) and the websites and databases described in this section and section 132; or

(2) information about higher education programs or student financial assistance available through a database or website of the Department.

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.

[(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) the institution’s cost of attendance for the year for which the determination is made; and

[(B) the quotient of—

[(i) the total amount of need-based grant aid and merit-based grant aid, from Federal, State, and insti-

tutional sources, provided to such students enrolled in the institution for such year; and

[(ii) the total number of such students receiving such need-based grant aid or merit-based grant aid for such year.

[(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) NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—

[(1) DEVELOPMENT OF NET PRICE 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 and other appropriate experts, develop a net price calculator to help current and prospective students, families, and other consumers estimate the individual net price of an institution of higher education for a student. The calculator shall be developed in a manner that enables current and prospective students, families, and consumers to determine an estimate of a current or prospective student's individual net price at a particular institution.

[(2) CALCULATION OF INDIVIDUAL NET PRICE.—For purposes of this subsection, an individual net price of an institution of higher education shall be calculated in the same manner as the net price of such institution is calculated under subsection (a)(3), except that the cost of attendance and the amount of need-based and merit-based aid available shall be calculated for the individual student as much as practicable.

[(3) USE OF NET PRICE CALCULATOR BY INSTITUTIONS.—Not later than two years after the date on which the Secretary makes the calculator developed under paragraph (1) available

to institutions of higher education, each institution of higher education that receives Federal funds under title IV shall make publicly available on the institution's website a net price calculator to help current and prospective students, families, and other consumers estimate a student's individual net price at such institution of higher education. Such calculator may be a net price calculator developed—

[(A) by the Department pursuant to paragraph (1); or

[(B) by the institution of higher education, if the institution's calculator includes, at a minimum, the same data elements included in the calculator developed under paragraph (1).

[(4) **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) stating that the estimate—

[(i) does not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance;

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

[(iii) may change;

[(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.

[(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.

[(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.]

(a) *DEFINITIONS.—In this section:*

(1) *COLLEGE SCORECARD WEBSITE.—The term “College Scorecard website” means the College Scorecard website required under subsection (b) and includes any successor website.*

(2) *COST OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “cost of attendance” has the meaning given such term in section 472(a).*

(3) *REQUIRED COSTS.—The term “required costs” means the sum of all the items listed in section 472(a) that are required by an institution of higher education for a program of study for the program length of a program of study, for the time to credential for a student, or for an award year of a program of study, as applicable, including—*

(A) the tuition and fees normally assessed a student enrolled in such program of study carrying the same academic workload, as determined by the institution; and

(B) in a case in which the institution requires a student to reside in institutionally owned or operated housing or to use institutionally owned or operated food services, the applicable standard allowance for such housing or food services determined by the institution in accordance with section 472(a)(5).

(4) *AMOUNT OF GRANT AND SCHOLARSHIP AID.—The term “amount of grant and scholarship aid” means the sum of all of the grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for the program length of a program of study, for the time to credential for a student, or for an award year of a program of study, as applicable, that a student does not have to repay, including need-based, merit-based, or athletic-based, or another type of grant and scholarship aid, that is—*

(A) offered under title IV;

(B) offered through other Federal programs;

(C) offered by the institution;

(D) offered by a State; or

(E) offered by any other source.

(5) *NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—*

(A) TOTAL NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—The term “total net price required for completion” means, with respect to a student in a program of study—

(i) the required costs charged to such student for the program of study for the time to credential; minus

(ii) the amount of grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for such program for the time to credential.

(B) ANNUAL NET PRICE REQUIRED FOR COMPLETION.—The term “annual net price required for completion” means, with respect to a student in a program of study—

(i) the required costs charged to such student for the program of study for an award year; minus

(ii) the amount of grant and scholarship aid that is available to the student for such program for such award year.

(6) NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—

(A) TOTAL NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “total net price of attendance” means, with respect to a student in a program of study, the sum of—

(i) the total net price required for completion; and

(ii) the sum, for the time to credential, of all the costs listed in section 472(a) that are not required costs.

(B) ANNUAL NET PRICE OF ATTENDANCE.—The term “annual net price of attendance” means, with respect to a student in a program of study, the net price of attendance for a specific year of the program of study, determined by disaggregating the total net price of attendance for the student by each year of the student’s time to credential.

(7) PROGRAM LENGTH.—The term “program length” means the minimum amount of time in weeks, months, or years that is specified in the catalog, marketing materials, or other official publications of an institution of higher education for a full-time student to complete the requirements to obtain the degree or credential awarded for a specific program of study.

(8) TIME TO CREDENTIAL.—The term “time to credential” means, with respect to a student, the actual amount of time in weeks, months, or years it takes the student to complete the requirements to obtain the degree or credential awarded for a specific program of study.

(b) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

(1) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION FOR TITLE IV INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS.—Not later than 18 months after the effective date of this subsection, the Secretary shall make publicly available on the College Scorecard website the following information with respect to students of the institution who have received Federal financial assistance described in paragraph (2)(I), for the most recent award year for which such information is available:

(A) INSTITUTIONS.—With respect to each institution of higher education that participates in a program under title IV, the following:

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

(ii) A link to the Universal Net Price calculator described in subsection (c) and, if applicable, a link to any net price calculator developed by the institution in accordance with paragraph (7) of such subsection.

(iii) Information on the type of institution, including predominant and highest credential awarded, research intensity, and programs of study offered.

(iv) *In the case of an institution that requires scores for a college entrance examination (such as the SAT or ACT) to be submitted, data on such submitted scores.*

(v) *The acceptance rate, determined by calculating the percentage of individuals who submitted a completed application to the institution who were accepted for enrollment.*

(vi) *The institution's cohort default rate, as defined under section 435(m).*

(vii) *A link to the website of the institution containing the information on campus safety required to be collected under section 485(i).*

(B) *INSTITUTIONS AND PROGRAMS OF STUDY.—With respect to each such institution and to each program of study at each such institution, the following:*

(i) *The geographic location.*

(ii) *Information on student enrollment, including the number and percentage of students enrolled full-time, less than full-time, and enrolled in distance education.*

(iii) *Information on the number of degree- or certificate-seeking undergraduate students who have transferred from another institution.*

(iv) *Information on student progression and completion, including time to credential and rates of withdrawal, retention, transfer, or completion.*

(v) *Information on college costs and financial aid, including—*

(I) *the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—*

(aa) *the required costs for such award year (determined for an institution based on the required costs for all programs of study);*

(bb) *the cost of attendance for such award year (determined for an institution based on the cost of attendance for all programs of study);*

(cc) *the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for such award year (determined for an institution based on the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for all programs of study);*

(dd) *the information described in item (cc) and subclause (II)(cc), disaggregated—*

(AA) *by the type of source described in subparagraphs (A) through (E) of subsection (a)(4); and*

(BB) *by whether such aid is need-based, merit-based, or athletic-based, or is another type of aid;*

(II) *with respect to students who completed a credential during the most recent award year, the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—*

(aa) the program length (determined for an institution based on the program length for all programs of study);

(bb) the time to credential (determined for an institution based on the time to credential for all programs of study);

(cc) the amount of grant and scholarship aid received for the time to credential (determined for an institution based on the amount of grant and scholarship aid received by students for all programs of study);

(dd) the total net price required for completion (determined for an institution based on the total net price required for completion for all programs of study); and

(ee) the total net price required for attendance (determined for an institution based on the total net price required for attendance for all programs of study);

(III) the number and percentage of students receiving any amount of grant and scholarship aid for such award year, and with respect to students who completed a credential during the most recent award year, the number and percentage of such students receiving any amount of grant and scholarship aid for the time to credential;

(IV) the average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in the required costs for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available; and

(V) the average annual percentage change and average annual dollar change in the total and annual net price required for completion for each of the three most recent academic years for which data are available.

(vi) Information on student debt and repayment, including—

(I) the average, median, minimum, and maximum amounts borrowed by students under title IV;

(II) information with respect to repayment of loans made under title IV, including borrower-based repayment rates, dollar-based repayment rates, and time spent in repayment; and

(III) the number and percentage of students who—

(aa) are borrowers of a loan made under title IV;

(bb) are not borrowers of a loan made under title IV, but have at least one parent who is a borrower of a loan made under title IV on behalf of the student; and

(cc) are borrowers of a loan made under title IV, and have at least one parent who is a bor-

rower of a loan made under title IV on behalf of the student.

(vii) Information on the earnings of students, including the average, median, minimum, and maximum values of—

(I) with respect to students who complete a program of study in the most recent award year for which data are available—

(aa) the annual earnings of such students; and

(bb) the value-added earnings (as defined in section 481(b)(3)(A)(iv)) of such students; and

(II) the annual earnings of students who were enrolled in a program of study at the institution during the most recent award year for which data are available, and who at the time the information is reported—

(aa) have not completed such program of study; and

(bb) are not enrolled at the institution in any program of study.

(C) PROGRAMS OF STUDY.—With respect to each program of study at each such institution, the credential awarded for completion of the program of study.

(2) DISAGGREGATED INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall ensure the information described in paragraph (1) is disaggregated, as applicable, by the following student characteristics:

(A) Financial circumstances including—

(i) household income categories, as determined by students' and families' adjusted gross income; and

(ii) student aid index categories, as determined by the Secretary.

(B) Sex.

(C) Race and ethnicity.

(D) Classification as a student with a disability.

(E) Enrollment status, including part-time or full-time enrollment, and status as a distance education student.

(F) Status as a first year, second year, third year, or subsequent year student, based on the number of years a student has been enrolled at the institution or in the program of study, as applicable.

(G) Status as an in-district, in-State, or out-of-State student.

(H) Status as an international student.

(I) The type of Federal financial assistance received, including—

(i) a Pell Grant;

(ii) a loan made under title IV; and

(iii) assistance described in section 131(f)(4) administered, sponsored, or supported by the Department of Defense or the Department of Veterans Affairs.

(J) Status as a participant in a program described in section 116(b)(3)(A)(ii) of the Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (29 U.S.C. 3141(b)(3)(A)(ii)).

(3) *COMPARISONS; ACCESS; PRIVACY.*—*The Secretary shall ensure that the College Scorecard website—*

(A) includes a method for users to easily compare institutions and programs, including in a manner that allows for such comparison based on—

(i) the institutional and program information described in paragraph (1); and

(ii) the student characteristics described in paragraph (2);

(B) provides access to information in an electronic and downloadable format; and

(C) complies with applicable Federal privacy statutes and uses appropriate statistical disclosure limitation techniques necessary to ensure that the data released to the public cannot be used to identify specific individuals, including with respect to disaggregated information under paragraph (2).

(4) *ANNUAL UPDATES; ADJUSTMENTS.*—

(A) ANNUAL DATA.—*The Secretary shall annually update the data on the College Scorecard website required under this subsection.*

(B) ADJUSTMENTS.—*The Secretary may adjust the data required under subclauses (IV) and (V) of paragraph (1)(B)(v) using the Consumer Price Index if the Secretary determines such adjustment is necessary.*

(5) *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.*

(c) *UNIVERSAL NET PRICE CALCULATOR.*—

(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—*Not later than 18 months after the effective date of this subsection, the Secretary shall establish, on a dedicated website of the Department, a Universal Net Price Calculator that—*

(A) allows an individual to select one or more institutions of higher education and one or more programs of study offered by each selected institution for which estimates shall be calculated;

(B) makes available to the individual, with respect to each selected institution and each selected program of study, the individual’s—

(i) annual estimated net price required for completion for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study, based on the average annual net price required for completion for similarly situated students (based on the individual’s information described in subparagraph (C)(iv)) for such institution or program for the most recent award year, adjusted in accordance with clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (C);

(ii) total estimated net price required for completion equal to the sum of the annual estimated net price required for completion for each year described in clause (i);

(iii) annual estimated net price of attendance for each year of expected enrollment based on the program length of a program of study, based on the average annual net price of attendance for similarly situated students (based on the individual's information described in subparagraph (C)(iv)) for such institution or program for the most recent award year, adjusted in accordance with clauses (i) through (iii) of subparagraph (C); and

(iv) total estimated net price of attendance equal to the sum of the annual estimated net price of attendance for each year described in clause (iii);

(C) with respect to calculating net price estimates as required by subparagraph (B)—

(i) determines an estimated annual percentage change for each year for which a net price calculation is made, based on the annual percentage change in an institution's or program's required costs and other costs under section 472(a), as applicable, for the most recent three-year period for which such data are reported;

(ii) provides the individual with the option to replace the estimated annual percentage change described in clause (i) with an alternative annual percentage change specified by the individual;

(iii) in the case of an institution that offers a multi-year tuition or net price guarantee program, allow the individual to have net price estimates calculated based on the provisions of such guarantee program; and

(iv) uses the individual's information, based on—

(I) the single set of questions developed by the Secretary in accordance with paragraph (2);

(II) the student-level data elements reported by institutions in accordance with section 668.408 of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations (or successor regulations);

(III) in the case of an individual who submits a Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483, the contents of such application; and

(IV) any additional information provided by the individual with respect to the individual's grant and scholarship aid;

(D) includes a method for users to easily compare institutions and programs; and

(E) provides access to information in an electronic and downloadable format.

(2) DEVELOPMENT OF INPUT QUESTIONS.—The Secretary shall develop a single set of questions for purposes of capturing the information specified in subsection (b)(2).

(3) UPDATES.—

(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update the data on the Universal Net Price Calculator Website, as required under this subsection, not less than annually.

(B) TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.—The Secretary shall regularly assess the format and technology of the Universal

Net Price Calculator website and make any changes or updates that the Secretary considers appropriate.

(4) *INTEGRATION WITH OTHER FEDERAL FINANCIAL AID RESOURCES.*—In accordance with subsection (d)(5) of section 483, the Secretary shall ensure that a website link or other means of accessing the Universal Net Price Calculator is included on the FAFSA website (or similar successor website).

(5) *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 Universal Net Price Calculator website.

(6) *CONSUMER TESTING.*—In developing and maintaining the College Scorecard website and the Universal Net Price Calculator website, the Secretary, in consultation with each appropriate head of each appropriate department and agency of the Federal Government shall—

(A) not later than 6 months after the date of the effective date of this subsection, and not less than once every 4 years thereafter, conduct consumer testing with appropriate persons, including current and prospective college students, family members of such students, institutions of higher education, and experts, to—

(i) improve the usefulness and relevance of the College Scorecard website, with respect to the presentation of the consumer information collected pursuant to subsection (b); and

(ii) ensure that the Universal Net Price Calculator website is usable and easily understandable and provides useful and relevant information to students and families; and

(B) display prominently on such websites in simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the most recent academic year for which satisfactory data is available, the categories of information described in paragraphs (1) and (2) of subsection (b) and paragraph (1)(B) of this subsection that were determined to be useful and relevant to students and families based on the consumer testing described in subparagraph (A).

(7) *USE OF NET PRICE CALCULATOR BY INSTITUTIONS.*—Not later than two years after the date on which the Secretary makes the calculator developed under paragraph (1) available to institutions of higher education, each institution of higher education that receives Federal funds under title IV shall make publicly available on the institution's website a net price calculator to provide to current and prospective students, families, and other consumers a student's individual net price estimates at such institution of higher education. Such calculator may be a net price calculator developed—

(A) by the Department pursuant to paragraph (1); or

(B) by the institution of higher education, if the institution's calculator includes, at a minimum, the same data

elements included in the calculator developed under paragraph (1).

(8) *NOTICE.*—A net price estimate calculated for an individual using the Universal Net Price Calculator under this subsection shall be accompanied by a clear and conspicuous notice—

(A) *stating that the estimate—*

(i) *does not represent a final determination, or actual award, of financial assistance;*

(ii) *shall not be binding on the Secretary, an institution of higher education, or a State; and*

(iii) *may change;*

(B) *stating that an individual 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;*

(C) *including a link to the website of the Department that allows individuals to access the Free Application for Federal Student Aid described in section 483; and*

(D) *explaining that the net price estimate calculated for an individual using the Universal Net Price Calculator under this subsection may differ from the net price calculated for such individual using an institution's net price calculator due to differences in data or methodology.*

[(k)] (d) **STUDENT AID RECIPIENT SURVEY.**—

(1) **SURVEY REQUIRED.**—The Secretary, acting through the Commissioner for Education Statistics, shall conduct, on a State-by-State basis, a survey of recipients of Federal student financial aid under title IV—

(A) *to identify the population of students receiving such Federal student financial aid;*

(B) *to describe the income distribution and other socioeconomic characteristics of recipients of such Federal student financial aid;*

(C) *to describe the combinations of aid from Federal, State, and private sources received by such recipients from all income categories;*

(D) *to describe the—*

(i) *debt burden of such loan recipients, and their capacity to repay their education debts; and*

(ii) *the impact of such debt burden on the recipients' course of study and post-graduation plans;*

(E) *to describe the impact of the cost of attendance of postsecondary education in the determination by students of what institution of higher education to attend; and*

(F) *to describe how the costs of textbooks and other instructional materials affect the costs of postsecondary education for students.*

(2) **FREQUENCY.**—The survey shall be conducted on a regular cycle and not less often than once every four years.

(3) **SURVEY DESIGN.**—The survey shall be representative of students from all types of institutions, including full-time and part-time students, undergraduate, graduate, and professional students, and current and former students.

(4) DISSEMINATION.—The Commissioner for Education Statistics shall disseminate to the public, in printed and electronic form, the information resulting from the survey.

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

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TITLE IV—STUDENT ASSISTANCE

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PART F—NEED ANALYSIS

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SEC. 472. COST OF ATTENDANCE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—For the purpose of this title, the term “cost of attendance” means—

(1) tuition and fees normally assessed a student [carrying the same academic workload] *enrolled in the same program of study and carrying the same academic workload* as determined by the institution;

(2) an allowance for books, course materials, supplies, and equipment, which shall include all such costs required of all such students in the [same course of study] *same program of study*, including a reasonable allowance for the documented rental or upfront purchase of a personal computer, as determined by the institution;

(3) an allowance for transportation, which may include transportation between campus, residences, and place of work, as determined by the institution;

(4) an allowance for miscellaneous personal expenses, for a student attending the institution on at least a half-time basis, as determined by the institution;

(5) an allowance for living expenses, including food and housing costs, to be incurred by the student attending the institution on at least a half-time basis, as determined by the institution, which shall include—

(A) for a student electing institutionally owned or operated food services, such as board or meal plans, a standard allowance for such services that provides the equivalent of three meals each day;

(B) for a student not electing institutionally owned or operated food services, such as board or meal plans, a standard allowance for purchasing food off campus that provides the equivalent of three meals each day;

(C) for a student without dependents residing in institutionally owned or operated housing, a standard allowance determined by the institution based on the average or median amount assessed to such residents for housing charges, whichever is greater;

(D) for a student with dependents residing in institutionally owned or operated housing, a standard allowance determined by the institution based on the average or median amount assessed to such residents for housing charges, whichever is greater;

(E) for a student living off campus, and not in institutionally owned or operated housing, a standard allowance for rent or other housing costs;

(F) for a dependent student residing at home with parents, a standard allowance that shall not be zero determined by the institution;

(G) for a student living in housing located on a military base or for which a basic allowance is provided under section 403(b) of title 37, United States Code, a standard allowance for food based upon such student's choice of purchasing food on-campus or off-campus (determined respectively in accordance with subparagraph (A) or (B)), but not for housing costs; and

(H) for all other students, an allowance based on the expenses reasonably incurred by such students for housing and food;

(6) for a student engaged in a program of study by correspondence, only tuition and fees and, if required, books and supplies, travel, and housing and food costs incurred specifically in fulfilling a required period of residential training;

(7) for a confined or incarcerated student, only tuition, fees, books, course materials, supplies, equipment, and the cost of obtaining a license, certification, or a first professional credential in accordance with paragraph (14);

(8) for a student enrolled in an academic program in a program of study abroad approved for credit by the student's home institution, reasonable costs associated with such study (as determined by the institution at which such student is enrolled);

(9) for a student with one or more dependents, an allowance based on the estimated actual expenses incurred for such dependent care, based on the number and age of such dependents, except that—

(A) such allowance shall not exceed the reasonable cost in the community in which such student resides for the kind of care provided; and

(B) the period for which dependent care is required includes, but is not limited to, class-time, study-time, field work, internships, and commuting time;

(10) for a student with a disability, an allowance (as determined by the institution) for those expenses related to the student's disability, including special services, personal assistance, transportation, equipment, and supplies that are reasonably incurred and not provided for by other assisting agencies;

(11) for a student receiving all or part of the student's instruction by means of telecommunications technology, no distinction shall be made with respect to the mode of instruction in determining costs;

(12) for a student engaged in a work experience under a cooperative education program, an allowance for reasonable costs associated with such employment (as determined by the institution);

(13) for a student who receives a Federal student loan made under this title or any other Federal law, to cover a student's cost of attendance at the institution, an allowance for the ac-

tual cost of any loan fee, origination fee, or insurance premium charged to such student or the parent of such student on such loan, or the average cost of any such fee or premium, as applicable; and

(14) for a student in a **[program]** *program of study* requiring professional licensure, certification, or a first professional credential, the cost of obtaining the license, certification, or a first professional credential.

(b) **SPECIAL RULE FOR LIVING EXPENSES FOR LESS-THAN-HALF-TIME STUDENTS.**—For students attending an institution of higher education less than half-time, an institution of higher education may include an allowance for living expenses, including food and housing costs in accordance with subsection (a)(4) for up to three semesters, or the equivalent, with no more than two semesters being consecutive.

(c) **DISCLOSURE OF COST OF ATTENDANCE ELEMENTS.**—Each institution shall make publicly available on the institution’s website a list of all the elements of cost of attendance *of each program of study at the institution* described in paragraphs (1) through (14) of subsection (a), and shall disclose such elements on any portion of the website describing tuition and fees **[of the institution]** *of such programs of study at the institution*.

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PART G—GENERAL PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

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SEC. 485E. **EARLY AWARENESS AND OUTREACH OF FINANCIAL AID ELIGIBILITY.**

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall implement early outreach activities in order to provide prospective students and their families with information about financial aid and estimates of financial aid. Such early outreach activities shall include the activities described in subsections (b), (c), and (d).

(b) **PELL GRANT EARLY AWARENESS ESTIMATES.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall produce a consumer-tested method of estimating student eligibility for Federal Pell Grants under section 401(b) utilizing the variables of family size and adjusted gross income, presented in electronic format. There shall be a method for students to indicate whether they are, or will be in—

- (A) a single-parent household;
- (B) a household with two parents; or
- (C) a household with no children or dependents.

(2) **CONSUMER TESTING.**—

(A) **IN GENERAL.**—The method of estimating eligibility described in paragraph (1) shall be consumer tested with prospective first-generation students and families as well as low-income individuals and families.

(B) **UPDATES.**—For award year 2024–2025 and each fourth succeeding award year thereafter, the design of the method of estimating eligibility shall be updated based on additional consumer testing with the populations described in subparagraph (A).

(3) DISTRIBUTION.—The method of estimating eligibility described in paragraph (1) shall be—

(A) made publicly and prominently available on the Department’s website; and

(B) actively shared by the Secretary with—

(i) institutions of higher education participating in programs under this title;

(ii) all middle and secondary schools eligible for funds under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;

(iii) local educational agencies and middle schools and high schools that serve students not less than 25 percent of whom meet a measure of poverty as described in section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965; and

(iv) agencies responsible for administering means-tested Federal benefit programs, as defined in section 479(b)(4)(H).

[(4) ELECTRONIC ESTIMATOR ON FAFSA.—In accordance with subsection (d)(5) of section 483, the Secretary shall maintain an electronic method for applicants to enter income and family size, and level of education sought information to calculate a non-binding estimate (which may include a range, ceiling, or minimum) of the applicant’s Federal financial aid available under this title and shall place such calculator on a prominent location on the FAFSA website and in a manner that encourages students to fill out the FAFSA.]

(c) EARLY AWARENESS PLANS.—The Secretary shall establish and implement early awareness and outreach plans to provide early information about the availability of Federal financial aid and estimates of prospective students’ eligibility for Federal financial aid as well as to promote the attainment of postsecondary education specifically among prospective first-generation students and families as well as low-income individuals and families, as follows:

(1) OUTREACH PLANS FOR LOW-INCOME FAMILIES.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop plans for each population described in this subparagraph to disseminate information about the availability of Federal financial aid under this title, in addition to and in coordination with the distribution of the method of estimating eligibility under subsection (b), to—

(i) all middle schools and secondary schools eligible for funds under part A of title I of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965;

(ii) local educational agencies and middle schools and high schools that serve students not less than 25 percent of whom meet a measure of poverty as described in section 1113(a)(5) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act;

(iii) households receiving assistance under the supplemental nutrition assistance program established under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.); and

(iv) agencies responsible for administering means-tested Federal benefit programs, as defined in section 479(b)(4)(H).

(B) CONTENT OF PLANS.—The plans described in paragraph (A) shall—

(i) provide students and their families with information on—

(I) the availability of the College Scorecard or any similar successor website;

(II) the electronic estimates of financial aid available under subsection (b);

(III) Federal financial aid available to students, including eligibility criteria for the Federal financial aid and an explanation of the Federal financial aid programs (including applicable Federal educational tax credits); and

(IV) resources that can inform students of financial aid that may be available from state-based financial aid, state-based college savings programs, and scholarships and other non-governmental sources;

(ii) describe how the dissemination of information will be conducted by the Secretary.

(C) REPORTING AND UPDATES.—The Secretary shall post the information about the plans under subparagraph (A) and associated goals publicly on the Department's website. On an annual basis, the Secretary shall report qualitative and quantitative outcomes regarding the implementation of the plans under subparagraph (A). The Secretary shall review and update such plans not less often than every 4 award years with the goal of progressively increasing the impact of the activities under this paragraph.

(D) PARTNERSHIP.—The Secretary may partner with States, State systems of higher education, institutions of higher education, or college access organizations to carry out this paragraph.

(2) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION PLANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop interagency coordination plans in order to inform more students and families, including low-income individuals or families and recipients of means-tested Federal benefits, about the availability of Federal financial aid under this title through participation in existing Federal programs or tax benefits that serve low-income individuals or families, in coordination with the following Secretaries:

(i) The Secretary of the Treasury.

(ii) The Secretary of Labor.

(iii) The Secretary of Health and Human Services.

(iv) The Secretary of Agriculture.

(v) The Secretary of Housing and Urban Development.

(vi) The Secretary of Commerce.

(vii) The Secretary of Veterans Affairs.

(viii) The Secretary of the Interior.

(B) PROCESS, ACTIVITIES, AND GOALS.—Each interagency coordination plan under subparagraph (A) shall—

(i) identify opportunities in which low-income individuals and families could be informed of the availability of Federal financial aid under this title through access to other Federal programs that serve low-income individuals and families;

(ii) identify methods to effectively inform low-income individuals and families of the availability of Federal financial aid for postsecondary education under this title and assist such individuals in completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid;

(iii) develop early awareness and FAFSA completion activities that align with the opportunities and methods identified under clauses (i) and (ii);

(iv) establish goals regarding the effects of the activities to be implemented under clause (iii); and

(v) provide information on how students and families can maintain access to Federal programs that serve low-income individuals and families operated by the agencies identified under subsection (A) while attending an institution of higher education.

(C) PLAN WITH SECRETARY OF THE TREASURY.—The interagency coordination plan under subparagraph (A)(i) between the Secretary and the Secretary of the Treasury shall further include specific methods to increase the application for Federal financial aid under this title from individuals who file Federal tax returns, including collaboration with tax preparation entities or other third parties, as appropriate.

(D) REPORTING AND UPDATES.—The Secretary shall post the information about the interagency coordination plans under this paragraph and associated goals publicly on the Department's website. The plans shall have the goal of progressively increasing the impact of the activities under this paragraph by increasing the number of low-income applicants for, and recipients of, Federal financial aid. The plans shall be updated not less than once every 4 years.

(3) NATIONWIDE PARTICIPATION IN EARLY AWARENESS PLANS.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall solicit voluntary public commitments from entities, such as States, State systems of higher education, institutions of higher education, and other interested organizations, to carry out early awareness plans, which shall include goals, to—

(i) notify prospective and existing students who are low-income individuals and families about their eligibility for Federal aid under this title, as well as State-based financial aid, if applicable, on an annual basis;

(ii) increase the number of prospective and current students who are low-income individuals and families filing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid; and

(iii) increase the number of prospective and current students who are low-income individuals and families enrolling in postsecondary education.

(B) REPORTING AND UPDATES.—Each entity that makes a voluntary public commitment to carry out an early awareness plan may submit quantitative and qualitative data based on the entity's progress toward the goals of the plan annually prior to a date selected by the Secretary.

(C) EARLY AWARENESS CHAMPIONS.—Based on data submitted by entities, the Secretary shall select and designate entities submitting public commitments, plans, and goals, as Early Awareness Champions on an annual basis. Those entities designated as Early Awareness Champions shall provide one or more case studies regarding the activities the entity undertook under this paragraph which shall be made public by the Secretary on the Department of Education website to promote best practices.

(d) PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall develop and implement a public awareness campaign designed using current and relevant independent research regarding strategies and media platforms found to be most effective in communicating with low-income populations in order to increase national awareness regarding the availability of Federal Pell Grants and financial aid under this title and, at the option of the Secretary, potential availability of state need-based financial aid.

(2) COORDINATION.—The public awareness campaign described in paragraph (1) shall leverage the activities in subsections (b) and (c) to highlight eligibility among low-income populations. In developing and implementing the campaign, the Secretary may work in coordination with States, institutions of higher education, early intervention and outreach programs under this title, other Federal agencies, agencies responsible for administering means-tested Federal benefit programs (as defined in section 479(b)(4)(H)), organizations involved in college access and student financial aid, secondary schools, local educational agencies, public libraries, community centers, businesses, employers, workforce investment boards, and organizations that provide services to individuals who are or were homeless, in foster care, or are disconnected youth.

(3) REPORTING.—The Secretary shall report on the success of the public awareness campaign described in paragraph (1) annually regarding the extent to which the public and target populations were reached using data commonly used to evaluate advertising and outreach campaigns and data regarding whether the campaign produced any increase in applicants for Federal aid under this title publicly on the Department of Education website.

* * * * *

SEC. 487. PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AGREEMENTS.

(a) REQUIRED FOR PROGRAMS OF ASSISTANCE; CONTENTS.—In order to be an eligible institution for the purposes of any program authorized under this title, an institution must be an institution of higher education or an eligible institution (as that term is defined

for the purpose of that program) and shall, except with respect to a program under subpart 4 of part A, enter into a program participation agreement with the Secretary. The agreement shall condition the initial and continuing eligibility of an institution to participate in a program upon compliance with the following requirements:

(1) The institution will use funds received by it for any program under this title and any interest or other earnings thereon solely for the purpose specified in and in accordance with the provision of that program.

(2) The institution shall not charge any student a fee for processing or handling any application, form, or data required to determine the student's eligibility for assistance under this title or the amount of such assistance.

(3) The institution will establish and maintain such administrative and fiscal procedures and records as may be necessary to ensure proper and efficient administration of funds received from the Secretary or from students under this title, together with assurances that the institution will provide, upon request and in a timely fashion, information relating to the administrative capability and financial responsibility of the institution to—

(A) the Secretary;

(B) the appropriate guaranty agency; and

(C) the appropriate accrediting agency or association.

(4) The institution will comply with the provisions of subsection (c) of this section and the regulations prescribed under that subsection, relating to fiscal eligibility.

(5) The institution will submit reports to the Secretary and, in the case of an institution participating in a program under part B or part E, to holders of loans made to the institution's students under such parts at such times and containing such information as the Secretary may reasonably require to carry out the purpose of this title.

(6) The institution will not provide any student with any statement or certification to any lender under part B that qualifies the student for a loan or loans in excess of the amount that student is eligible to borrow in accordance with sections 425(a), 428(a)(2), and 428(b)(1) (A) and (B).

(7) The institution will comply with the requirements of section 485.

(8) In the case of an institution that advertises job placement rates as a means of attracting students to enroll in the institution, the institution will make available to prospective students, at or before the time of application (A) the most recent available data concerning employment statistics, graduation statistics, and any other information necessary to substantiate the truthfulness of the advertisements, and (B) relevant State licensing requirements of the State in which such institution is located for any job for which the course of instruction is designed to prepare such prospective students.

(9) In the case of an institution participating in a program under part B or D, the institution will inform all eligible borrowers enrolled in the institution about the availability and eligibility of such borrowers for State grant assistance from the

State in which the institution is located, and will inform such borrowers from another State of the source for further information concerning such assistance from that State.

(10) The institution certifies that it has in operation a drug abuse prevention program that is determined by the institution to be accessible to any officer, employee, or student at the institution.

(11) In the case of any institution whose students receive financial assistance pursuant to section 484(d), the institution will make available to such students a program proven successful in assisting students in obtaining a certificate of high school equivalency.

(12) The institution certifies that—

(A) the institution has established a campus security policy; and

(B) the institution has complied with the disclosure requirements of section 485(f).

(13) The institution will not deny any form of Federal financial aid to any student who meets the eligibility requirements of this title on the grounds that the student is participating in a program of study abroad approved for credit by the institution.

(14)(A) The institution, in order to participate as an eligible institution under part B or D, will develop a Default Management Plan for approval by the Secretary as part of its initial application for certification as an eligible institution and will implement such Plan for two years thereafter.

(B) Any institution of higher education which changes ownership and any eligible institution which changes its status as a parent or subordinate institution shall, in order to participate as an eligible institution under part B or D, develop a Default Management Plan for approval by the Secretary and implement such Plan for two years after its change of ownership or status.

(C) This paragraph shall not apply in the case of an institution in which (i) neither the parent nor the subordinate institution has a cohort default rate in excess of 10 percent, and (ii) the new owner of such parent or subordinate institution does not, and has not, owned any other institution with a cohort default rate in excess of 10 percent.

(15) The institution acknowledges the authority of the Secretary, guaranty agencies, lenders, accrediting agencies, the Secretary of Veterans Affairs, and the State agencies under subpart 1 of part H to share with each other any information pertaining to the institution's eligibility to participate in programs under this title or any information on fraud and abuse.

(16)(A) The institution will not knowingly employ an individual in a capacity that involves the administration of programs under this title, or the receipt of program funds under this title, who has been convicted of, or has pled *nolo contendere* or guilty to, a crime involving the acquisition, use, or expenditure of funds under this title, or has been judicially determined to have committed fraud involving funds under this title or contract with an institution or third party servicer that has been terminated under section 432 involving the ac-

quisition, use, or expenditure of funds under this title, or who has been judicially determined to have committed fraud involving funds under this title.

(B) The institution will not knowingly contract with or employ any individual, agency, or organization that has been, or whose officers or employees have been—

(i) convicted of, or pled *nolo contendere* or guilty to, a crime involving the acquisition, use, or expenditure of funds under this title; or

(ii) judicially determined to have committed fraud involving funds under this title.

(17) The institution will complete surveys conducted as a part of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS) or any other Federal postsecondary institution data collection effort, as designated by the Secretary, in a timely manner and to the satisfaction of the Secretary.

(18) The institution will meet the requirements established pursuant to section 485(g).

(19) The institution will not impose any penalty, including the assessment of late fees, the denial of access to classes, libraries, or other institutional facilities, or the requirement that the student borrow additional funds, on any student because of the student's inability to meet his or her financial obligations to the institution as a result of the delayed disbursement of the proceeds of a loan made under this title due to compliance with the provisions of this title, or delays attributable to the institution.

(20) The institution will not provide any commission, bonus, or other incentive payment based directly or indirectly on success in securing enrollments or financial aid to any persons or entities engaged in any student recruiting or admission activities or in making decisions regarding the award of student financial assistance, except that this paragraph shall not apply to the recruitment of foreign students residing in foreign countries who are not eligible to receive Federal student assistance.

(21) The institution will meet the requirements established by the Secretary and accrediting agencies or associations, and will provide evidence to the Secretary that the institution has the authority to operate within a State.

(22) The institution will comply with the refund policy established pursuant to section 484B.

(23)(A) The institution, if located in a State to which section 4(b) of the National Voter Registration Act of 1993 (42 U.S.C. 1973gg-2(b)) does not apply, will make a good faith effort to distribute a mail voter registration form, requested and received from the State, to each student enrolled in a degree or certificate program and physically in attendance at the institution, and to make such forms widely available to students at the institution.

(B) The institution shall request the forms from the State 120 days prior to the deadline for registering to vote within the State. If an institution has not received a sufficient quantity of forms to fulfill this section from the State within 60 days prior to the deadline for registering to vote in the State, the institu-

tion shall not be held liable for not meeting the requirements of this section during that election year.

(C) This paragraph shall apply to general and special elections for Federal office, as defined in section 301(3) of the Federal Election Campaign Act of 1971 (2 U.S.C. 431(3)), and to the elections for Governor or other chief executive within such State).

(D) The institution shall be considered in compliance with the requirements of subparagraph (A) for each student to whom the institution electronically transmits a message containing a voter registration form acceptable for use in the State in which the institution is located, or an Internet address where such a form can be downloaded, if such information is in an electronic message devoted exclusively to voter registration.

(24) In the case of a proprietary institution of higher education (as defined in section 102(b)), such institution will derive not less than ten percent of such institution's revenues from sources other than Federal funds that are disbursed or delivered to or on behalf of a student to be used to attend such institution (referred to in this paragraph and subsection (d) as "Federal education assistance funds"), as calculated in accordance with subsection (d)(1), or will be subject to the sanctions described in subsection (d)(2).

(25) In the case of an institution that participates in a loan program under this title, the institution will—

(A) develop a code of conduct with respect to such loans with which the institution's officers, employees, and agents shall comply, that—

(i) prohibits a conflict of interest with the responsibilities of an officer, employee, or agent of an institution with respect to such loans; and

(ii) at a minimum, includes the provisions described in subsection (e);

(B) publish such code of conduct prominently on the institution's website; and

(C) administer and enforce such code by, at a minimum, requiring that all of the institution's officers, employees, and agents with responsibilities with respect to such loans be annually informed of the provisions of the code of conduct.

(26) The institution will, upon written request, disclose to the alleged victim of any crime of violence (as that term is defined in section 16 of title 18, United States Code), or a nonforcible sex offense, the report on the results of any disciplinary proceeding conducted by such institution against a student who is the alleged perpetrator of such crime or offense with respect to such crime or offense. If the alleged victim of such crime or offense is deceased as a result of such crime or offense, the next of kin of such victim shall be treated as the alleged victim for purposes of this paragraph.

(27) In the case of an institution that has entered into a preferred lender arrangement, the institution will at least annually compile, maintain, and make available for students attending the institution, and the families of such students, a

list, in print or other medium, of the specific lenders for loans made, insured, or guaranteed under this title or private education loans that the institution recommends, promotes, or endorses in accordance with such preferred lender arrangement. In making such list, the institution shall comply with the requirements of subsection (h).

(28)(A) The institution will, upon the request of an applicant for a private education loan, provide to the applicant the form required under section 128(e)(3) of the Truth in Lending Act (15 U.S.C. 1638(e)(3)), and the information required to complete such form, to the extent the institution possesses such information.

(B) For purposes of this paragraph, the term “private education loan” has the meaning given such term in section 140 of the Truth in Lending Act.

(29) The institution certifies that the institution—

(A) has developed plans to effectively combat the unauthorized distribution of copyrighted material, including through the use of a variety of technology-based deterrents; and

(B) will, to the extent practicable, offer alternatives to illegal downloading or peer-to-peer distribution of intellectual property, as determined by the institution in consultation with the chief technology officer or other designated officer of the institution.

(b) HEARINGS.—(1) An institution that has received written notice of a final audit or program review determination and that desires to have such determination reviewed by the Secretary shall submit to the Secretary a written request for review not later than 45 days after receipt of notification of the final audit or program review determination.

(2) The Secretary shall, upon receipt of written notice under paragraph (1), arrange for a hearing and notify the institution within 30 days of receipt of such notice the date, time, and place of such hearing. Such hearing shall take place not later than 120 days from the date upon which the Secretary notifies the institution.

(c) AUDITS; FINANCIAL RESPONSIBILITY; ENFORCEMENT OF STANDARDS.—(1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this title, the Secretary shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to provide for—

(A)(i) except as provided in clauses (ii) and (iii), a financial audit of an eligible institution with regard to the financial condition of the institution in its entirety, and a compliance audit of such institution with regard to any funds obtained by it under this title or obtained from a student or a parent who has a loan insured or guaranteed by the Secretary under this title, on at least an annual basis and covering the period since the most recent audit, conducted by a qualified, independent organization or person in accordance with standards established by the Comptroller General for the audit of governmental organizations, programs, and functions, and as prescribed in regulations of the Secretary, the results of which shall be submitted to the Secretary and shall be available to cognizant guaranty agencies, eligible lenders, State agencies, and the appropriate

State agency notifying the Secretary under subpart 1 of part H, except that the Secretary may modify the requirements of this clause with respect to institutions of higher education that are foreign institutions, and may waive such requirements with respect to a foreign institution whose students receive less than \$500,000 in loans under this title during the award year preceding the audit period;

(ii) with regard to an eligible institution which is audited under chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, deeming such audit to satisfy the requirements of clause (i) for the period covered by such audit; or

(iii) at the discretion of the Secretary, with regard to an eligible institution (other than an eligible institution described in section 102(a)(1)(C)) that has obtained less than \$200,000 in funds under this title during each of the 2 award years that precede the audit period and submits a letter of credit payable to the Secretary equal to not less than $\frac{1}{2}$ of the annual potential liabilities of such institution as determined by the Secretary, deeming an audit conducted every 3 years to satisfy the requirements of clause (i), except for the award year immediately preceding renewal of the institution's eligibility under section 498(g);

(B) in matters not governed by specific program provisions, the establishment of reasonable standards of financial responsibility and appropriate institutional capability for the administration by an eligible institution of a program of student financial aid under this title, including any matter the Secretary deems necessary to the sound administration of the financial aid programs, such as the pertinent actions of any owner, shareholder, or person exercising control over an eligible institution;

(C)(i) except as provided in clause (ii), a compliance audit of a third party servicer (other than with respect to the servicer's functions as a lender if such functions are otherwise audited under this part and such audits meet the requirements of this clause), with regard to any contract with an eligible institution, guaranty agency, or lender for administering or servicing any aspect of the student assistance programs under this title, at least once every year and covering the period since the most recent audit, conducted by a qualified, independent organization or person in accordance with standards established by the Comptroller General for the audit of governmental organizations, programs, and functions, and as prescribed in regulations of the Secretary, the results of which shall be submitted to the Secretary; or

(ii) with regard to a third party servicer that is audited under chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, such audit shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of clause (i) for the period covered by such audit;

(D)(i) a compliance audit of a secondary market with regard to its transactions involving, and its servicing and collection of, loans made under this title, at least once a year and covering the period since the most recent audit, conducted by a qualified, independent organization or person in accordance with standards established by the Comptroller General for the audit

of governmental organizations, programs, and functions, and as prescribed in regulations of the Secretary, the results of which shall be submitted to the Secretary; or

(ii) with regard to a secondary market that is audited under chapter 75 of title 31, United States Code, such audit shall be deemed to satisfy the requirements of clause (i) for the period covered by the audit;

(E) the establishment, by each eligible institution under part B responsible for furnishing to the lender the statement required by section 428(a)(2)(A)(i), of policies and procedures by which the latest known address and enrollment status of any student who has had a loan insured under this part and who has either formally terminated his enrollment, or failed to re-enroll on at least a half-time basis, at such institution, shall be furnished either to the holder (or if unknown, the insurer) of the note, not later than 60 days after such termination or failure to re-enroll;

(F) the limitation, suspension, or termination of the participation in any program under this title of an eligible institution, or the imposition of a civil penalty under paragraph (3)(B) whenever the Secretary has determined, after reasonable notice and opportunity for hearing, that such institution has violated or failed to carry out any provision of this title, any regulation prescribed under this title, or any applicable special arrangement, agreement, or limitation, except that no period of suspension under this section shall exceed 60 days unless the institution and the Secretary agree to an extension or unless limitation or termination proceedings are initiated by the Secretary within that period of time;

(G) an emergency action against an institution, under which the Secretary shall, effective on the date on which a notice and statement of the basis of the action is mailed to the institution (by registered mail, return receipt requested), withhold funds from the institution or its students and withdraw the institution's authority to obligate funds under any program under this title, if the Secretary—

(i) receives information, determined by the Secretary to be reliable, that the institution is violating any provision of this title, any regulation prescribed under this title, or any applicable special arrangement, agreement, or limitation,

(ii) determines that immediate action is necessary to prevent misuse of Federal funds, and

(iii) determines that the likelihood of loss outweighs the importance of the procedures prescribed under subparagraph (D) for limitation, suspension, or termination, except that an emergency action shall not exceed 30 days unless limitation, suspension, or termination proceedings are initiated by the Secretary against the institution within that period of time, and except that the Secretary shall provide the institution an opportunity to show cause, if it so requests, that the emergency action is unwarranted;

(H) the limitation, suspension, or termination of the eligibility of a third party servicer to contract with any institution to administer any aspect of an institution's student assistance

program under this title, or the imposition of a civil penalty under paragraph (3)(B), whenever the Secretary has determined, after reasonable notice and opportunity for a hearing, that such organization, acting on behalf of an institution, has violated or failed to carry out any provision of this title, any regulation prescribed under this title, or any applicable special arrangement, agreement, or limitation, except that no period of suspension under this subparagraph shall exceed 60 days unless the organization and the Secretary agree to an extension, or unless limitation or termination proceedings are initiated by the Secretary against the individual or organization within that period of time; and

(I) an emergency action against a third party servicer that has contracted with an institution to administer any aspect of the institution's student assistance program under this title, under which the Secretary shall, effective on the date on which a notice and statement of the basis of the action is mailed to such individual or organization (by registered mail, return receipt requested), withhold funds from the individual or organization and withdraw the individual or organization's authority to act on behalf of an institution under any program under this title, if the Secretary—

- (i) receives information, determined by the Secretary to be reliable, that the individual or organization, acting on behalf of an institution, is violating any provision of this title, any regulation prescribed under this title, or any applicable special arrangement, agreement, or limitation,
 - (ii) determines that immediate action is necessary to prevent misuse of Federal funds, and
 - (iii) determines that the likelihood of loss outweighs the importance of the procedures prescribed under subparagraph (F), for limitation, suspension, or termination,
- except that an emergency action shall not exceed 30 days unless the limitation, suspension, or termination proceedings are initiated by the Secretary against the individual or organization within that period of time, and except that the Secretary shall provide the individual or organization an opportunity to show cause, if it so requests, that the emergency action is unwarranted.

(2) If an individual who, or entity that, exercises substantial control, as determined by the Secretary in accordance with the definition of substantial control in subpart 3 of part H, over one or more institutions participating in any program under this title, or, for purposes of paragraphs (1) (H) and (I), over one or more organizations that contract with an institution to administer any aspect of the institution's student assistance program under this title, is determined to have committed one or more violations of the requirements of any program under this title, or has been suspended or debarred in accordance with the regulations of the Secretary, the Secretary may use such determination, suspension, or debarment as the basis for imposing an emergency action on, or limiting, suspending, or terminating, in a single proceeding, the participation of any or all institutions under the substantial control of that individual or entity.

(3)(A) Upon determination, after reasonable notice and opportunity for a hearing, that an eligible institution has engaged in substantial misrepresentation of the nature of its educational program, its financial charges, or the employability of its graduates, the Secretary may suspend or terminate the eligibility status for any or all programs under this title of any otherwise eligible institution, in accordance with procedures specified in paragraph (1)(D) of this subsection, until the Secretary finds that such practices have been corrected.

(B)(i) Upon determination, after reasonable notice and opportunity for a hearing, that an eligible institution—

(I) has violated or failed to carry out any provision of this title or any regulation prescribed under this title; or

(II) has engaged in substantial misrepresentation of the nature of its educational program, its financial charges, and the employability of its graduates,

the Secretary may impose a civil penalty upon such institution of not to exceed \$25,000 for each violation or misrepresentation.

(ii) Any civil penalty may be compromised by the Secretary. In determining the amount of such penalty, or the amount agreed upon in compromise, the appropriateness of the penalty to the size of the institution of higher education subject to the determination, and the gravity of the violation, failure, or misrepresentation shall be considered. The amount of such penalty, when finally determined, or the amount agreed upon in compromise, may be deducted from any sums owing by the United States to the institution charged.

(4) The Secretary shall publish a list of State agencies which the Secretary determines to be reliable authority as to the quality of public postsecondary vocational education in their respective States for the purpose of determining eligibility for all Federal student assistance programs.

(5) The Secretary shall make readily available to appropriate guaranty agencies, eligible lenders, State agencies notifying the Secretary under subpart 1 of part H, and accrediting agencies or associations the results of the audits of eligible institutions conducted pursuant to paragraph (1)(A).

(6) The Secretary is authorized to provide any information collected as a result of audits conducted under this section, together with audit information collected by guaranty agencies, to any Federal or State agency having responsibilities with respect to student financial assistance, including those referred to in subsection (a)(15) of this section.

(7) Effective with respect to any audit conducted under this subsection after December 31, 1988, if, in the course of conducting any such audit, the personnel of the Department of Education discover, or are informed of, grants or other assistance provided by an institution in accordance with this title for which the institution has not received funds appropriated under this title (in the amount necessary to provide such assistance), including funds for which reimbursement was not requested prior to such discovery or information, such institution shall be permitted to offset that amount against any sums determined to be owed by the institution pursuant to such audit, or to receive reimbursement for that amount (if the institution does not owe any such sums).

(d) IMPLEMENTATION OF NON-FEDERAL REVENUE REQUIREMENT.—

(1) CALCULATION.—In making calculations under subsection (a)(24), a proprietary institution of higher education shall—

(A) use the cash basis of accounting, except in the case of loans described in subparagraph (D)(i) that are made by the proprietary institution of higher education;

(B) consider as revenue only those funds generated by the institution from—

(i) tuition, fees, and other institutional charges for students enrolled in programs eligible for assistance under this title;

(ii) activities conducted by the institution that are necessary for the education and training of the institution's students, if such activities are—

(I) conducted on campus or at a facility under the control of the institution;

(II) performed under the supervision of a member of the institution's faculty; and

(III) required to be performed by all students in a specific educational program at the institution; and

(iii) funds paid by a student, or on behalf of a student by a party other than the institution, for an education or training program that is not eligible for funds under this title, if the program—

(I) is approved or licensed by the appropriate State agency;

(II) is accredited by an accrediting agency recognized by the Secretary; or

(III) provides an industry-recognized credential or certification;

(C) presume that any Federal education assistance funds that are disbursed or delivered to or on behalf of a student will be used to pay the student's tuition, fees, or other institutional charges, regardless of whether the institution credits those funds to the student's account or pays those funds directly to the student, except to the extent that the student's tuition, fees, or other institutional charges are satisfied by—

(i) grant funds provided by non-Federal public agencies or private sources independent of the institution;

(ii) funds provided under a contractual arrangement with a Federal, State, or local government agency for the purpose of providing job training to low-income individuals who are in need of that training;

(iii) funds used by a student from savings plans for educational expenses established by or on behalf of the student and which qualify for special tax treatment under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

(iv) institutional scholarships described in subparagraph (D)(iii);

(D) include institutional aid as revenue to the school only as follows:

(i) in the case of loans made by a proprietary institution of higher education on or after July 1, 2008 and prior to July 1, 2012, the net present value of such loans made by the institution during the applicable institutional fiscal year accounted for on an accrual basis and estimated in accordance with generally accepted accounting principles and related standards and guidance, if the loans—

(I) are bona fide as evidenced by enforceable promissory notes;

(II) are issued at intervals related to the institution's enrollment periods; and

(III) are subject to regular loan repayments and collections;

(ii) in the case of loans made by a proprietary institution of higher education on or after July 1, 2012, only the amount of loan repayments received during the applicable institutional fiscal year, excluding repayments on loans made and accounted for as specified in clause (i); and

(iii) in the case of scholarships provided by a proprietary institution of higher education, only those scholarships provided by the institution in the form of monetary aid or tuition discounts based upon the academic achievements or financial need of students, disbursed during each fiscal year from an established restricted account, and only to the extent that funds in that account represent designated funds from an outside source or from income earned on those funds;

(E) in the case of each student who receives a loan on or after July 1, 2008, and prior to July 1, 2011, that is authorized under section 428H or that is a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan, treat as revenue received by the institution from sources other than funds received under this title, the amount by which the disbursement of such loan received by the institution exceeds the limit on such loan in effect on the day before the date of enactment of the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act of 2008; and

(F) exclude from revenues—

(i) the amount of funds the institution received under part C, unless the institution used those funds to pay a student's institutional charges;

(ii) the amount of funds the institution received under subpart 4 of part A;

(iii) the amount of funds provided by the institution as matching funds for a program under this title;

(iv) the amount of funds provided by the institution for a program under this title that are required to be refunded or returned; and

(v) the amount charged for books, supplies, and equipment, unless the institution includes that amount as tuition, fees, or other institutional charges.

(2) SANCTIONS.—

(A) INELIGIBILITY.—A proprietary institution of higher education that fails to meet a requirement of subsection (a)(24) for two consecutive institutional fiscal years shall be ineligible to participate in the programs authorized by this title for a period of not less than two institutional fiscal years. To regain eligibility to participate in the programs authorized by this title, a proprietary institution of higher education shall demonstrate compliance with all eligibility and certification requirements under section 498 for a minimum of two institutional fiscal years after the institutional fiscal year in which the institution became ineligible.

(B) ADDITIONAL ENFORCEMENT.—In addition to such other means of enforcing the requirements of this title as may be available to the Secretary, if a proprietary institution of higher education fails to meet a requirement of subsection (a)(24) for any institutional fiscal year, then the institution's eligibility to participate in the programs authorized by this title becomes provisional for the two institutional fiscal years after the institutional fiscal year in which the institution failed to meet the requirement of subsection (a)(24), except that such provisional eligibility shall terminate—

(i) on the expiration date of the institution's program participation agreement under this subsection that is in effect on the date the Secretary determines that the institution failed to meet the requirement of subsection (a)(24); or

(ii) in the case that the Secretary determines that the institution failed to meet a requirement of subsection (a)(24) for two consecutive institutional fiscal years, on the date the institution is determined ineligible in accordance with subparagraph (A).

(3) PUBLICATION ON **COLLEGE NAVIGATOR** *COLLEGE SCORECARD* WEBSITE.—The Secretary shall publicly disclose on the **College Navigator** *College Scorecard* website—

(A) the identity of any proprietary institution of higher education that fails to meet a requirement of subsection (a)(24); and

(B) the extent to which the institution failed to meet such requirement.

(4) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—Not later than July 1, 2009, and July 1 of each succeeding year, the Secretary shall submit to the authorizing committees a report that contains, for each proprietary institution of higher education that receives assistance under this title, as provided in the audited financial statements submitted to the Secretary by each institution pursuant to the requirements of subsection (a)(24)—

(A) the amount and percentage of such institution's revenues received from sources under this title; and

(B) the amount and percentage of such institution's revenues received from other sources.

(e) CODE OF CONDUCT REQUIREMENTS.—An institution of higher education's code of conduct, as required under subsection (a)(25), shall include the following requirements:

(1) BAN ON REVENUE-SHARING ARRANGEMENTS.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—The institution shall not enter into any revenue-sharing arrangement with any lender.

(B) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this paragraph, the term “revenue-sharing arrangement” means an arrangement between an institution and a lender under which—

(i) a lender provides or issues a loan that is made, insured, or guaranteed under this title to students attending the institution or to the families of such students; and

(ii) the institution recommends the lender or the loan products of the lender and in exchange, the lender pays a fee or provides other material benefits, including revenue or profit sharing, to the institution, an officer or employee of the institution, or an agent.

(2) GIFT BAN.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—No officer or employee of the institution who is employed in the financial aid office of the institution or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or agent who has responsibilities with respect to education loans, shall solicit or accept any gift from a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans.

(B) DEFINITION OF GIFT.—

(i) IN GENERAL.—In this paragraph, the term “gift” means any gratuity, favor, discount, entertainment, hospitality, loan, or other item having a monetary value of more than a de minimus amount. The term includes a gift of services, transportation, lodging, or meals, whether provided in kind, by purchase of a ticket, payment in advance, or reimbursement after the expense has been incurred.

(ii) EXCEPTIONS.—The term “gift” shall not include any of the following:

(I) Standard material, activities, or programs on issues related to a loan, default aversion, default prevention, or financial literacy, such as a brochure, a workshop, or training.

(II) Food, refreshments, training, or informational material furnished to an officer or employee of an institution, or to an agent, as an integral part of a training session that is designed to improve the service of a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans to the institution, if such training contributes to the professional development of the officer, employee, or agent.

(III) Favorable terms, conditions, and borrower benefits on an education loan provided to a student employed by the institution if such terms, conditions, or benefits are comparable to those provided to all students of the institution.

(IV) Entrance and exit counseling services provided to borrowers to meet the institution’s responsibilities for entrance and exit counseling as required by subsections (b) and (l) of section 485, as long as—

(aa) the institution's staff are in control of the counseling, (whether in person or via electronic capabilities); and

(bb) such counseling does not promote the products or services of any specific lender.

(V) Philanthropic contributions to an institution from a lender, servicer, or guarantor of education loans that are unrelated to education loans or any contribution from any lender, guarantor, or servicer that is not made in exchange for any advantage related to education loans.

(VI) State education grants, scholarships, or financial aid funds administered by or on behalf of a State.

(iii) RULE FOR GIFTS TO FAMILY MEMBERS.—For purposes of this paragraph, a gift to a family member of an officer or employee of an institution, to a family member of an agent, or to any other individual based on that individual's relationship with the officer, employee, or agent, shall be considered a gift to the officer, employee, or agent if—

(I) the gift is given with the knowledge and acquiescence of the officer, employee, or agent; and

(II) the officer, employee, or agent has reason to believe the gift was given because of the official position of the officer, employee, or agent.

(3) CONTRACTING ARRANGEMENTS PROHIBITED.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—An officer or employee who is employed in the financial aid office of the institution or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans, or an agent who has responsibilities with respect to education loans, shall not accept from any lender or affiliate of any lender any fee, payment, or other financial benefit (including the opportunity to purchase stock) as compensation for any type of consulting arrangement or other contract to provide services to a lender or on behalf of a lender relating to education loans.

(B) EXCEPTIONS.—Nothing in this subsection shall be construed as prohibiting—

(i) an officer or employee of an institution who is not employed in the institution's financial aid office and who does not otherwise have responsibilities with respect to education loans, or an agent who does not have responsibilities with respect to education loans, from performing paid or unpaid service on a board of directors of a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans;

(ii) an officer or employee of the institution who is not employed in the institution's financial aid office but who has responsibility with respect to education loans as a result of a position held at the institution, or an agent who has responsibility with respect to education loans, from performing paid or unpaid service on a board of directors of a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans, if the institution has a

written conflict of interest policy that clearly sets forth that officers, employees, or agents must recuse themselves from participating in any decision of the board regarding education loans at the institution; or

(iii) an officer, employee, or contractor of a lender, guarantor, or servicer of education loans from serving on a board of directors, or serving as a trustee, of an institution, if the institution has a written conflict of interest policy that the board member or trustee must recuse themselves from any decision regarding education loans at the institution.

(4) INTERACTION WITH BORROWERS.—The institution shall not—

(A) for any first-time borrower, assign, through award packaging or other methods, the borrower's loan to a particular lender; or

(B) refuse to certify, or delay certification of, any loan based on the borrower's selection of a particular lender or guaranty agency.

(5) PROHIBITION ON OFFERS OF FUNDS FOR PRIVATE LOANS.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—The institution shall not request or accept from any lender any offer of funds to be used for private education loans (as defined in section 140 of the Truth in Lending Act), including funds for an opportunity pool loan, to students in exchange for the institution providing concessions or promises regarding providing the lender with—

(i) a specified number of loans made, insured, or guaranteed under this title;

(ii) a specified loan volume of such loans; or

(iii) a preferred lender arrangement for such loans.

(B) DEFINITION OF OPPORTUNITY POOL LOAN.—In this paragraph, the term “opportunity pool loan” means a private education loan made by a lender to a student attending the institution or the family member of such a student that involves a payment, directly or indirectly, by such institution of points, premiums, additional interest, or financial support to such lender for the purpose of such lender extending credit to the student or the family.

(6) BAN ON STAFFING ASSISTANCE.—

(A) PROHIBITION.—The institution shall not request or accept from any lender any assistance with call center staffing or financial aid office staffing.

(B) CERTAIN ASSISTANCE PERMITTED.—Nothing in paragraph (1) shall be construed to prohibit the institution from requesting or accepting assistance from a lender related to—

(i) professional development training for financial aid administrators;

(ii) providing educational counseling materials, financial literacy materials, or debt management materials to borrowers, provided that such materials disclose to borrowers the identification of any lender that assisted in preparing or providing such materials; or

(iii) staffing services on a short-term, nonrecurring basis to assist the institution with financial aid-related functions during emergencies, including State-declared or federally declared natural disasters, federally declared national disasters, and other localized disasters and emergencies identified by the Secretary.

(7) ADVISORY BOARD COMPENSATION.—Any employee who is employed in the financial aid office of the institution, or who otherwise has responsibilities with respect to education loans or other student financial aid of the institution, and who serves on an advisory board, commission, or group established by a lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, shall be prohibited from receiving anything of value from the lender, guarantor, or group of lenders or guarantors, except that the employee may be reimbursed for reasonable expenses incurred in serving on such advisory board, commission, or group.

(f) INSTITUTIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR TEACH-OUTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In the event the Secretary initiates the limitation, suspension, or termination of the participation of an institution of higher education in any program under this title under the authority of subsection (c)(1)(F) or initiates an emergency action under the authority of subsection (c)(1)(G) and its prescribed regulations, the Secretary shall require that institution to prepare a teach-out plan for submission to the institution's accrediting agency or association in compliance with section 496(c)(3), the Secretary's regulations on teach-out plans, and the standards of the institution's accrediting agency or association.

(2) TEACH-OUT PLAN DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term “teach-out plan” means a written plan that provides for the equitable treatment of students if an institution of higher education ceases to operate before all students have completed their program of study, and may include, if required by the institution's accrediting agency or association, an agreement between institutions for such a teach-out plan.

(g) INSPECTOR GENERAL REPORT ON GIFT BAN VIOLATIONS.—The Inspector General of the Department shall—

(1) submit an annual report to the authorizing committees identifying all violations of an institution's code of conduct that the Inspector General has substantiated during the preceding year relating to the gift ban provisions described in subsection (e)(2); and

(2) make the report available to the public through the Department's website.

(h) PREFERRED LENDER LIST REQUIREMENTS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—In compiling, maintaining, and making available a preferred lender list as required under subsection (a)(27), the institution will—

(A) clearly and fully disclose on such preferred lender list—

(i) not less than the information required to be disclosed under section 153(a)(2)(A);

(ii) why the institution has entered into a preferred lender arrangement with each lender on the preferred

lender list, particularly with respect to terms and conditions or provisions favorable to the borrower; and

(iii) that the students attending the institution, or the families of such students, do not have to borrow from a lender on the preferred lender list;

(B) ensure, through the use of the list of lender affiliates provided by the Secretary under paragraph (2), that—

(i) there are not less than three lenders of loans made under part B that are not affiliates of each other included on the preferred lender list and, if the institution recommends, promotes, or endorses private education loans, there are not less than two lenders of private education loans that are not affiliates of each other included on the preferred lender list; and

(ii) the preferred lender list under this paragraph—

(I) specifically indicates, for each listed lender, whether the lender is or is not an affiliate of each other lender on the preferred lender list; and

(II) if a lender is an affiliate of another lender on the preferred lender list, describes the details of such affiliation;

(C) prominently disclose the method and criteria used by the institution in selecting lenders with which to enter into preferred lender arrangements to ensure that such lenders are selected on the basis of the best interests of the borrowers, including—

(i) payment of origination or other fees on behalf of the borrower;

(ii) highly competitive interest rates, or other terms and conditions or provisions of loans under this title or private education loans;

(iii) high-quality servicing for such loans; or

(iv) additional benefits beyond the standard terms and conditions or provisions for such loans;

(D) exercise a duty of care and a duty of loyalty to compile the preferred lender list under this paragraph without prejudice and for the sole benefit of the students attending the institution, or the families of such students;

(E) not deny or otherwise impede the borrower's choice of a lender or cause unnecessary delay in loan certification under this title for those borrowers who choose a lender that is not included on the preferred lender list; and

(F) comply with such other requirements as the Secretary may prescribe by regulation.

(2) LENDER AFFILIATES LIST.—

(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain and regularly update a list of lender affiliates of all eligible lenders, and shall provide such list to institutions for use in carrying out paragraph (1)(B).

(B) USE OF MOST RECENT LIST.—An institution shall use the most recent list of lender affiliates provided by the Secretary under subparagraph (A) in carrying out paragraph (1)(B).

(i) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of this section:

(1) AGENT.—The term “agent” has the meaning given the term in section 151.

(2) AFFILIATE.—The term “affiliate” means a person that controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another person. A person controls, is controlled by, or is under common control with another person if—

(A) the person directly or indirectly, or acting through one or more others, owns, controls, or has the power to vote five percent or more of any class of voting securities of such other person;

(B) the person controls, in any manner, the election of a majority of the directors or trustees of such other person; or

(C) the Secretary determines (after notice and opportunity for a hearing) that the person directly or indirectly exercises a controlling interest over the management or policies of such other person’s education loans.

(3) EDUCATION LOAN.—The term “education loan” has the meaning given the term in section 151.

(4) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligible institution” means any such institution described in section 102 of this Act.

(5) OFFICER.—The term “officer” has the meaning given the term in section 151.

(6) PREFERRED LENDER ARRANGEMENT.—The term “preferred lender arrangement” has the meaning given the term in section 151.

(j) CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in the amendments made by the Higher Education Amendments of 1992 shall be construed to prohibit an institution from recording, at the cost of the institution, a hearing referred to in subsection (b)(2), subsection (c)(1)(D), or subparagraph (A) or (B)(i) of subsection (c)(2), of this section to create a record of the hearing, except the unavailability of a recording shall not serve to delay the completion of the proceeding. The Secretary shall allow the institution to use any reasonable means, including stenographers, of recording the hearing.

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MINORITY VIEWS

INTRODUCTION

As the cost of college continues to rise, increased transparency of college costs is critical. Students and families should have accurate, useful information to help them navigate the college search process and ensure they are making informed decisions. H.R. 6498, the *Student Financial Clarity Act* amends the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (HEA) to codify the College Scorecard and require the Secretary of Education to develop a Universal Net Price Calculator to help students compare estimated college costs. The *Student Financial Clarity Act* has the potential to increase many students' ability to make informed decisions for their postsecondary education. However, Committee Democrats strongly urge Republicans to make significant changes to this bill prior to its consideration in the House to ensure it substantially improves transparency for students, instead of making them more confused.

CONGRESS NEEDS TO IMPROVE THE COLLEGE SCORECARD AND NET PRICE CALCULATORS

College Scorecard

The College Scorecard was established in 2015 under the Obama Administration to serve as a tool to provide consumer information on specific institutions of higher education.¹ This new application of public data was the first attempt at providing the general public a comprehensive review of student outcomes and federal student aid trends across colleges. The College Scorecard utilizes data reported to the Department of Education (Department) through the Integrated Postsecondary Data System (IPEDS), a data system run by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) within the Department's Institute of Education Sciences (IES). Although the Department has continued to operate and update the College Scorecard since its inception, the tool is not currently codified in the HEA.

After the launch of the College Scorecard, the Department has continued to improve the quality and expand the types of data on college costs and outcomes collected from colleges. As more robust and disaggregated data was reported through the College Scorecard, students gained a better sense of which colleges were best suited to help them achieve their postsecondary goals.

In 2022 and 2023, the Biden Administration made several improvements to the College Scorecard aimed at increasing outcomes

¹ College Scorecard, U.S. Dep't of Educ., <https://collegescorecard.ed.gov/>; *The New College Scorecard*, Inside Higher Ed (Sep. 13, 2015), <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2015/09/14/obama-administration-publishes-new-college-earnings-loan-repayment-data>.

and cost transparency. In February 2022, the College Scorecard was updated to include:²

- Median earnings data at the institutional level;
- Median earnings data disaggregated by income, gender and dependency status;
- Share of former students earning more than a typical high school graduate; and
- Refreshed cumulative student loan debt data by field of study.

In April 2023, additional College Scorecard changes were made, including:³

- Median earnings data at the institutional and program level;
- Median earnings data at the institutional level;
- Updated loan repayment rates at the institutional and program level;
- Race/ethnicity and gender data for college staff and faculty;
- Notice if a program of study is provided entirely through distance education.

Higher education data experts applauded these additions as big strides in transparency. These experts also emphasized that additional improvements to the College Scorecard are still needed “to increase transparency and fill gaps in our postsecondary data system so students can more easily find high-value postsecondary programs that align with their goals, and steer clear of programs that do not.”⁴

Net Price Calculators

Since 2011, the HEA has required colleges to provide students with a net price calculator on their websites as a condition of receiving federal student aid.⁵ Net price calculators estimate students’ net price by sharing the net prices of students with similar financial and academic circumstances.⁶ Net price calculators take into account grants and scholarships to provide a *preliminary estimate* of out-of-pocket net price for one year of college.

Currently, net price calculators require the student to input the following student information to *estimate* their Student Aid Index (SAI):⁷ student and family income; dependency status; and esti-

²IHEP Celebrates Updates to the College Scorecard to Better Equip Students to Make Higher Ed Choices and Policymakers to Promote Equity-Driven Policies, Inst. for Higher Educ. Pol. (Feb. 7, 2022), <https://www.ihep.org/press/ihep-celebrates-updates-to-the-college-scorecard-to-better-equip-students-to-make-higher-education-choices-and-policymakers-to-promote-equity-driven-policies/>.

³Letter from the Postsecondary Data Collaborative to Former U.S. Dep’t of Educ. Sec’y Dr. Miguel Cardona (Feb. 23 2022), <https://live-ihep-wp.pantheonsite.io/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/2022-College-Scorecard-updates.pdf>.

⁴*Updated College Scorecard Data Shed New Light on Student Earnings, Borrower Repayment Outcomes, Campus Diversity, and More*, Inst. for Higher Educ. Pol. (May 15, 2023), <https://www.ihep.org/updated-college-scorecard-data-earnings-repayment-campus-diversity/>; Chazz Robinson, *New Wins for the College Scorecard*, Third Way (Jun. 14, 2023), <https://www.thirdway.org/blog/new-wins-for-the-college-scorecard>.

⁵20 U.S.C. 1015a; Lucie Lapovsky, *Designing a Net Price Calculator* (opinion), Inside Higher Ed (Mar. 3, 2011), <https://www.insidehighered.com/views/2011/03/04/designing-net-price-calculator>.

⁶For a database of all net price calculators, see <https://collegecost.ed.gov/net-price>.

⁷See IES Net Price Calculator Info Center at <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/report-your-data/resource-center-net-price>.

mated cost of attendance. Net price calculators then provide the following *estimates* back to a student for one year of college:⁸

- Total cost of attendance;
- Tuition and fees; room and board;
- Books and supplies; other expenses (personal expenses, transportation, etc.);
- Total grant aid;
- Net price;
- Percent of the cohort (full-time, first-time students) that received grant aid; and
- Various disclaimers and caveats required by the HEA.

Students typically use these calculators early in their college search process and prior to completing the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) form to start comparing potential costs. However, a student's cost of attendance is not finalized until they submit a FAFSA and a college provides a formal financial aid award letter. While net price calculators are helpful as currently devised, there have been calls for the calculators to better estimate the full cost of attendance, account for indirect costs, and differentiate between merit grants, need-based grants, and the various loan types.⁹

In the 116th Congress, the bipartisan *Net Price Calculator Improvement Act* was incorporated into the *College Affordability Act*, comprehensive legislation to reauthorize the *Higher Education Act of 1965* (HEA) which was reported out of Committee along party lines.¹⁰ The *Net Price Calculator Improvement Act* would have made changes to the required estimates produced by colleges' net price calculators and would have allowed the Department to establish a Universal Net Price Calculator. In the 118th Congress, Republicans passed out of Committee the *College Cost Reduction Act* (CCRA), which incorporated an updated version of the *Net Price Calculator Improvement Act*. This updated version would actually require—not simply allow—the Department to develop a Universal Net Price Calculator within the College Scorecard, in addition to making several changes to the College Scorecard's required data.¹¹ Committee Democrats did not support the passage of CCRA, but did express support for this provision and suggested it “could form the basis of legislation with a viable chance of passage into law.”¹²

H.R. 6498 ATTEMPTS TO IMPROVE BROKEN COLLEGE SCORECARD

H.R. 6498 partially addresses the need to improve the College Scorecard and enhance net price calculators. The bill codifies the College Scorecard and adds required consumer information on both the College Scorecard and a newly established Universal Net Price Calculator. Specifically, it requires the Secretary to display and annually update on the College Scorecard institutional information

⁸*Id.*

⁹Monica Maldonado, *How Net Price Calculators Can Better Serve Students*, Inst. for Higher Educ. Pol. (Oct. 23, 2019), <https://www.ihep.org/how-net-price-calculators-can-better-serve-students/>.

¹⁰*Net Price Calculator Improvement Act*, H.R. 1915, 116th Cong. (2019); *College Affordability Act*, H.R. 4674, 116th Cong. § 1021 (2019).

¹¹*Net Price Calculator Improvement Act*, H.R. 1214, 118th Cong. (2023); *College Cost Reduction Act*, H.R. 6951, 118th Cong. § 112 (2024).

¹²H.R. Rep. No. 118–739 at 383 (2024).

and data on programs of study, disaggregated to the extent privacy laws allow. This would include information on student enrollment, progression and completion, college costs and financial aid, student debt and repayment, and post-program earnings, among other things. The bill also requires that the College Scorecard provide users with the ability to compare such information between institutions. H.R. 6498 also requires the Secretary to establish a Universal Net Price Calculator that allows individuals to compare the costs of both institutions and programs of study along with allowing providing individuals with various estimated net prices for completion based on self-identified similarly situated students. Like the College Scorecard, the bill mandates the Universal Net Price Calculator be updated annually. Unlike the current system which allows individual institutions to decide what information goes into their unique net price calculators, this bill's framework seemingly aims to set up a one-stop-shop for students to compare institutions with standardized and streamlined metrics. H.R. 6498 requires the Secretary to conduct regular consumer testing to help improve the usefulness and relevance of both products.

While Committee Democrats have typically been supportive of codifying and making improvements to the College Scorecard and creating the Universal Net Price Calculator, there are several concerns, outlined in these views, which make it difficult to believe this legislation could be successfully implemented if enacted as drafted. Several—but not all—of these concerns could be addressed by reverting to a framework for the College Scorecard and Net Price Calculator changes contain within the Republican-led CCRA that the Committee considered last Congress.

H.R. 6498 DOES NOT INCLUDE ADEQUATE INFORMATION ON INDIRECT COSTS

H.R. 6498 creates several defined metrics related to a student's estimated net price, aimed at helping students understand how much they may pay for college after accounting for grants and scholarships. However, the bill's multiple net price definitions will make it very confusing for prospective students to actually estimate their cost of attendance. Specifically, the bill defines the following new terms: total net price required for completion; annual net price required for completion; total net price of attendance; and annual net price of attendance. None of these net price estimates paint a full picture of cost of attendance beyond tuition and fees.

The bill defines *total net price required for completion* as the difference between required costs charged a student and the amount of grant aid available to the student. By using this definition, students are only able to estimate how much they will pay for tuition and fees, and, if mandated by their institution, on-campus housing and dining services fees. This means that students who plan on living on campus will be unable to fully evaluate an adequate net price for institutions that offer, but do not require, on-campus housing or meal plans. But, the bill also defines *total net price of attendance*, calculated as the sum of the total net price required for completion and indirect costs. As defined in H.R. 6498, the net price of completion metric does not adequately take into consideration "indirect costs" that arise for college students, which calls

into question its value for students. Indirect costs include necessities such as transportation, housing, technology, and other costs, all of which students must bear to fully access and complete their coursework.¹³ For example, without having funds to access stable housing as they matriculate, a student cannot be expected to adequately tend to their studies. Therefore, the total net price required for completion metric does not paint the full picture of cost of attendance and its inclusion makes it harder for students to make “apples-to-apples” comparisons between various colleges.

A stronger metric to incorporate in the bill for purposes of the calculations of net price for completion would be *the cost of attendance*. The cost of attendance is typically known as the full price to attend an institution that more seamlessly incorporates both direct costs *and* indirect costs. In a 2022 report, the U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO) found that most colleges and universities do not provide students with all the information necessary to help students clearly understand their financial aid offers.¹⁴ GAO reported that approximately 55 percent of institutions do not provide a total cost of attendance that include key direct and indirect costs for students.¹⁵ GAO also found that an estimated 91 percent of institutions do not include or understate the net price, including both direct and indirect costs,¹⁶ in their financial aid offers.¹⁷ As a result of these findings, GAO recommended federal lawmakers to take up legislation to mandate institutions of higher education to follow best practices for providing students with clear and standard financial aid offers. Thus, to improve the College Scorecard and the proposed Universal Net Price Calculator, Congress must include better information on indirect costs and incorporate these costs into the estimates published by the Universal Net Price Calculator. Specifically, Committee Democrats strongly suggest defining any definition of “net price” as one that shows the difference between the cost of attendance and grant aid and requiring the consumer testing of all definitions that will be presented to students on a net price calculator to determine if they provide clarity.

H.R. 6498 DATA DOES NOT INCLUDE ALL STUDENTS

H.R. 6498 requires the College Scorecard to include various data aggregated at the institutional and program levels, including but not limited to information on college entrance exams, acceptance rates, retention and completion rates, college costs, student debt, and post-graduate earnings. Regrettably, the bill only requires institutions to report this information for students who have received

¹³ *Planning for Indirect Costs*, uAspire (last visited Jan. 5, 2026), <https://www.uaspire.org/getattachment/57ed37ef-7ea9-4521-8c41-39f4494e169c/FY25-Planning-for-Indirect-Expenses.pdf?lang=en-US>.

¹⁴ U.S. Gov’t Accountability Off., GAO–23–104708, *Financial Aid Offers: Action Needed to Improve Information on College Costs and Student Aid* (Nov. 2022), <https://www.gao.gov/assets/gao-23-104708.pdf>.

¹⁵ *Id.* GAO defined direct costs as “Costs that are typically billed directly by the college. Examples include tuition, fees, and on-campus housing and meals.” It defined indirect costs as “Costs that students pay to other parties throughout the academic term. Examples include books, academic supplies, off-campus housing and meals, and other miscellaneous expenses, such as transportation.”

¹⁶ GAO defined net price as “The actual amount a student will need to pay to attend a particular college. This should be estimated by subtracting gift aid (and not loans or work-study) from the full cost of attendance (key direct and indirect costs).”

¹⁷ *Id.*

Federal financial assistance, specifically tuition assistance from programs administered by the Departments of Education, Labor, Defense, or Veterans Affairs. The data of students who do not receive such funds is not included in these statistical samples.

Committee Democrats are disappointed this legislation does not include data for all students who are enrolled in postsecondary education. Currently, roughly one third of undergraduate students are not represented in College Scorecard data because they do not receive federal student aid.¹⁸ Further, when the Committee considered a similar policy in the 118th Congress, the American Association of Community Colleges estimated that more than half of all community college students enrolled in credit-bearing coursework would *not* be included in the aggregate data.¹⁹ This makes this data much less reliable for students interested in community college, and policymakers trying to analyze how this population is performing. If Congress is going to reform higher education data, this information gap is unacceptable. All students, not just those receiving federal assistance, deserve reliable and accurate cost estimates and representative information. Incomplete, nonrepresentative data is not sufficient for students to make informed choices, and it is harder for policymakers to address any equity gaps that data could show.²⁰

Two consistent bipartisan goals within higher education data reform are to count all students and streamline the reporting requirements of colleges. Committee Democrats urge Congress to lift the federal ban on student-level data and require the Department to collect data on all students, not just those who have received Federal financial aid. Better data on costs and outcomes—specifically a student-unit record data system, such as what is proposed in the bipartisan *College Transparency Act*²¹—would further improve the College Scorecard and help *all* students make even more informed choices.

H.R. 6498 DOES NOT ALIGN WITH OTHER FEDERAL REPORTING REQUIREMENTS

The policies developed in H.R. 6498 to improve consumer information on earnings do not take into consideration several other federal reporting requirements that the Department of Education is attempting to implement and reform regarding program-level earnings.

In 2023, the Biden Administration finalized regulations establishing the strongest ever gainful employment (GE) rule to protect

¹⁸The analysis found that 72 percent of all undergraduate students received one of the following in the 2019–2020 academic year: Pell grants, student loans, Federal Work-Study and G.I. Benefits. Note that this calculation does not include students receiving DOD or DOL benefits. Nearly Three-Quarters of Undergraduates Received Some Type of Financial Aid in 2019–20, Nat'l Inst. of Educ. Stats., Inst. for Educ. Sci. (Jul. 26, 2023), <https://ies.ed.gov/learn/press-release/nearly-three-quarters-undergraduates-received-some-type-financial-aid-2019-0920>.

¹⁹Letter from Walter G. Bumphus, President and CEO, Amer. Assoc. of Community Coll., to Rep. Virginia Foxx, Chair, Cmte. on Educ. & the Workforce and Rep. Bobby Scott, Ranking Member, Cmte. on Educ. & Workforce (Jan. 30, 2024), <https://www.aacc.nche.edu/2024/01/31/aacc-letter-on-college-cost-reduction-act/>.

²⁰Amanda Janice Roberson, *Why Incomplete Data Leaves Us With Incomplete Student Outcomes*, Inst. for Higher Educ. Pol. (Dec. 1, 2017), <https://www.ihep.org/why-incomplete-data-leaves-us-with-incomplete-student-outcomes/>.

²¹H.R. 4806, 119th Cong. (2025).

students from low-quality career training programs.²² The rule established a debt-to-earnings metric and an earnings threshold that certificate programs and programs at for-profit colleges must pass to continue receiving federal student aid. The Biden Administration also developed the Financial Value Transparency (FVT) framework to improve outcomes transparency across all postsecondary programs.²³ Further, the Department created a portal to disclose the GE data for all postbaccalaureate programs at all public and non-profit colleges, regardless of whether they are subject to GE enforcement. Together, these regulations (described jointly as GE/FVT) established a strong framework to protect students and taxpayers and ensure accountability.

Thus, Committee Democrats were pleased to see the bill's requirement to report several elements of FVT data disaggregated at the program level. We felt they worked in concert with the GE/FVT regulations to provide students a stronger sense of their potential earnings outcomes. During the markup, Rep. Takano (D-CA) offered an amendment to codify these regulations to ensure they remain consistent across administrations. The amendment was not adopted. Without codification of these regulations, students are relying on the Trump Administration to faithfully implement GE/FVT regulations, which Committee Democrats are skeptical of, given the previous Trump Administration's interest in dismantling GE.²⁴

Further, earlier this year Congressional Republicans passed their sweeping cuts to higher education within P.L. 119–21, which included an accountability framework somewhat similar, but not identical, to GE/FVT, designed to protect students from programs that do not provide graduates with adequate earnings. On January 9, negotiators with the Department reached consensus on new program accountability rules that at least one negotiator feels, “fall short of what the minimum standard for accountability should be.”²⁵ As of the filing of this report, the Department of Education has not finalized the regulations to implement the accountability policies on which the negotiators reached consensus. Therefore, Committee Democrats urge Congress to wait to pass legislation around reporting program-level earnings outcomes until it can ensure the policies are aligned with—or improve upon—upcoming regulations on GE, FVT, and P.L. 119–21's accountability framework. Otherwise, we risk contributing to the already confusing federal student aid landscape created by P.L. 119–21.

²² Hugh T. Ferguson, *ED Releases Final Rule on Gainful Employment and Financial Value Transparency Framework*, Nat'l Assoc. of Student Fin. Aid Administrators (Sep. 27, 2023), https://www.nasfaa.org/news-item/31745/ED_Releases_Final_Rule_on_Gainful_Employment_and_Financial_Value_Transparency_Framework.

²³ Fact Sheet: Holding Colleges Accountable for Delivering Financial Value for Students, U.S. Dep't of Educ. (Oct. 2023), www2.ed.gov/policy/highered/reg/hearulemaking/2021/gainful-employment-and-transparency-fact-sheet.pdf.

²⁴ Yan Cao, Robert Shireman, *Betsy DeVos's Shameful Repeal of the Gainful Employment Rule*, The Century Foundation (Jul. 1, 2019), <https://tcf.org/content/commentary/betsy-devoss-shameful-repeal-gainful-employment-rule/>.

²⁵ Katherine Knott, *ED Panel Signs Off on New Earnings Test*, Inside Higher Ed., Jan. 9, 2026, <https://www.insidehighered.com/news/government/student-aid-policy/2026/01/09/ed-panel-signs-new-earnings-test>.

H.R. 6498 CREATES MORE CONFUSION FOR PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS

In addition to concerns around indirect costs, the exclusion of students not receiving federal financial assistance, and the lack of alignment with ongoing regulatory efforts, there are a handful of other provisions in the legislation that raise concern for Committee Democrats.

Net Price Calculator Differences

H.R. 6498 does not require the data on a college's net price calculator to match the data the college reports to the Universal Net Price Calculator. Therefore, a student could receive one cost estimate from the college's website and a conflicting cost estimate from ED's website. Thankfully, the Republicans supported an amendment by Rep. Alma Adams (D-NC) to require the Department of Education to make it clear on the Universal Net Price Calculator that results on an institution's net price calculator and those for the same institution on the Universal Net Price Calculator may differ. However, just noting that discrepancy does not provide a clear picture for students looking to understand college costs. Committee Democrats suggest more should be done to help students understand how and why the figures between the Universal Net Price Calculator and the net price calculation on the institution's website differ.

Outside Scholarships

H.R. 6498 requires colleges to publish information on the amount of grant and scholarship aid available to students. The bill's definition includes need-, merit- and athletic-based grant and scholarship aid that comes in the form of federal student aid, state aid, institutional aid, or from "any other source." It is very important for students to have a snapshot of how much grant aid they may receive; however, it is unclear whether colleges will be able to accurately estimate outside scholarship amounts. It is not appropriate to expect an institution to know how much private grant and scholarship aid may be available to any prospective student. For example, institutions likely Committee Democrats suggest speaking with institutions to better understand how much insight into private grants and scholarships they have for prospective students prior to submitting the FAFSA.

Privacy Concerns

The bill raises several privacy concerns due to requirements related to disaggregation of reported data. While the bill explicitly states that its disaggregation requirements are subject to federal privacy laws, it is unclear how some requirements of the bill can be implemented without the potential to violate former student's privacy or suppress significant data. For example, H.R. 6498 requires colleges to report the minimum and maximum earnings of both students who completed their studies and those who did not complete their studies. However, these metrics contemplate discrete data points that belong to individuals. It is possible that such reporting could threaten the privacy of the highest- and lowest-earners in a particular program, when combined with other pub-

licly available data. Additionally, there is an inconsistency between the disaggregation requirements in the bill and current reporting requirements that do not require disaggregation. The bill requires nearly all institutional data to be disaggregated by various characteristics. But similarly, such disaggregation for several metrics, such as the Cohort Default Rate, likely could not be completed without privacy suppression due to too much specificity. Committee Democrats believe these privacy issues should be addressed before the bill is considered any further.

IPEDS Reporting

H.R. 6498 requires a significant amount of data to be included in the College Scorecard that the Department does not currently collect from institutions via IPEDS. Given that College Scorecard data is obtained from IPEDS, it is unclear where the data that the bill requires to be reported to the College Scorecard, but is not collected by the Department, will originate. And given that the bill does not proactively require colleges report these items to the Department, this bill could create a situation where colleges may be required to comply with a data reporting process neither fully contemplated nor authorized in law.

College Navigator

H.R. 6498 eliminates the authorization of the College Navigator, a predecessor to the College Scorecard, codified in the HEA, that provides public-facing information on higher education.²⁶ While this makes sense in practice to migrate entirely to the College Scorecard, the legislation does not ensure that the data statutorily required to be included in College Navigator content that are not captured in the bill's new reporting requirements are incorporated into the Scorecard for students to review. Committee Democrats suggest that all previously available data under Sec. 132(i) of the HEA continue to be updated and made publicly available either within the College Scorecard or other databases managed by the Department.

H.R. 6498 CANNOT BE IMPLEMENTED WITH A GUTTED DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Since returning to office in January, the Trump Administration has made no secret of its plans to dismantle the Department of Education (Department) and in turn, has fired a significant number of staff.²⁷ Shortly after being confirmed by the Senate, Secretary Linda McMahon initiated a reduction in force for the Department's staff, which impacted approximately 50 percent of the staff,²⁸ who were experts in the policies and programs of the Department of Education, such as those at the Institute for Education

²⁶ See College Scorecard, Nat'l Ctr. For Educ. Stats., <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/>.

²⁷ See e.g., Exec. Order No. 14242, 90 Fed. Reg. 13679 (Mar. 20, 2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/03/improving-education-outcomes-by-empowering-parents-states-and-communities/>.

²⁸ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Educ., U.S. Department of Education Initiates Reduction in Force (Mar. 11, 2025), <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-initiates-reduction-force>.

Sciences.²⁹ Since that time the Department has attempted to fire even more staff. For instance, during the government shutdown in the fall, the Administration attempted to cut 465 Department employees, though they were later challenged in courts and ultimately stopped by Congress.³⁰ Further, the Department has signed several interagency agreements to hand off much of its responsibilities to other agencies,³¹ with apparent plans to implement even more.³²

The Department of Education, particularly the Institute for Education Sciences, would play a critical role in the administration of H.R. 6498. The bill requires mandates its implementation no later than 18 months after enactment and also requires the Universal Net Price Calculator to be updated annually. The verification and analysis of these data is a significant undertaking that involves the Office of Federal Student Aid (FSA), and the Office of Planning, Evaluation, and Policy Development (OPEPD), and the NCES. Given this Administration's decimation of the Department, Committee Democrats have very serious concerns about the Administration's capacity to successfully implement the bill.

DEMOCRATIC AMENDMENTS OFFERED DURING MARKUP OF H.R. 6498

Committee Democrats put forward seven amendments to improve the bill. Democrats also offered proposals to codify regulations that were designed to ensure that students understand the value of the program they seek to complete, highlight the impact of recent changes in law would have on students, prohibit the impact of the dismantling of the Department of Education on the implementation of this bill, and help avoid student confusion between the data provided on individual colleges' net price calculators and the Universal Net Price Calculator. Committee Republicans rejected five of the six Democratic amendments that were put to a vote.

Amendment	Offered By	Description	Action Taken
#1	Mr. Takano	Codifies Gainful Employment and Financial Value Transparency regulations.	Defeated
#2	Ms. Adams	Requires the Secretary of Education to conduct annual consumer testing with first-generation, low-income, and prospective students.	Offered and withdrawn
#3	Ms. Bonamici	Prohibits the transfer of Department of Education authority to implement the bill.	Defeated

²⁹ Cory Turner, *The Education Department is being cut in half. Here's what's being lost*, NPR (Mar. 13, 2025), <https://www.npr.org/2025/03/12/nx-s1-5325854/trump-education-department-lay-offs-civil-rights-student-loans>.

³⁰ Paige Shoemaker DeMio, Weadé James, *The Trump Administration's Latest Staffing Cuts at the Department of Education Threaten Children's Success Across the Country*, The Century Foundation (Oct. 28, 2025), <https://www.americanprogress.org/article/the-trump-administrations-latest-staffing-cuts-at-the-department-of-education-threaten-childrens-success-across-the-country/>.

³¹ Press Release, U.S. Dep't of Educ., U.S. Department of Education Announces Six New Agency Partnerships to Break Up Federal Bureaucracy (Nov. 18, 2025), <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-education-announces-six-new-agency-partnerships-break-federal-bureaucracy>.

³² See e.g., Juan Perez, Jr., *The inside view of McMahon's plans for special education*, POLITICO, Dec. 22, 2025, https://www.politico.com/newsletters/weekly-education/2025/12/22/the-inside-view-of-mcmahons-plans-for-special-education-00702310?template_id=OT5J0E7B7DD7&is_login_link=true.

Amendment	Offered By	Description	Action Taken
#4	Ms. Adams	Requires the Secretary of Education to inform students that the Universal Net Price Calculator may provide different estimates than what is on a college's Net Price Calculator.	Adopted by voice vote
#5	Ms. Wilson	Prohibits the use of interagency agreements to implement the bill.	Defeated
#6	Mr. Scott	Provides funding for the Department of Education to implement the bill and requires the Secretary to report to Congress on how the funds will be used.	Defeated
#7	Mr. Scott	Requires the Universal Net Price Calculator to include information on the amount of federal student aid a student would have received prior to the enactment of PL 119-21 compared to after.	Defeated

CONCLUSION

Committee Democrats generally support the idea of codifying the College Scorecard and creating a Universal Net Price Calculator. Many even voted to report H.R. 6498 to the House floor, recognizing the bill as step in the right direction to be improved upon as the legislative process continues. However, many Committee Democrats remain concerned the bill includes language that could confuse potential students as they decide which college is the best financial fit for them and their families. We urge Committee Republicans work in a bipartisan fashion to make the changes described in these views before the final bill is considered in the House of Representatives.

ROBERT C. "BOBBY" SCOTT,
Ranking Member.
 FREDERICA S. WILSON,
 SUZANNE BONAMICI,
 MARK DESAULNIER,
 JAHANA HAYES,
Members of Congress.

