

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3223

To assist institutions of higher education help at-risk students stay in school and complete their 4-year postsecondary academic programs.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 4, 1999

Mr. FATTAH (for himself, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. CONYERS, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Ms. NORTON, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. FROST, Mr. ROMERO-BARCELO, Ms. LEE, Mrs. JONES of Ohio, Mr. JEFFERSON, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HINOJOSA, Mr. PASTOR, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. CLAY, Mr. OWENS, Mr. MARTINEZ, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. RUSH, Mr. RANGEL, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, and Ms. SCHAKOWSKY) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To assist institutions of higher education help at-risk students stay in school and complete their 4-year postsecondary academic programs.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “William H. Gray, III,
5 College Completion Challenge Grant Program of 1999”.

1 **SEC. 2. PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.**

2 Subpart 2 of part A of title IV of the Higher Edu-
3 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1132a et seq.) is amended
4 by adding at the end thereof the following new chapter:

5 **“CHAPTER 4—WILLIAM H. GRAY, III, COL-**
6 **LEGE COMPLETION CHALLENGE**
7 **GRANT PROGRAM**

8 **“SEC. 408A. FINDINGS.**

9 “Congress makes the following findings:

10 “(1) Students from low-income families are sig-
11 nificantly more likely to leave a 4-year institution of
12 higher education without a baccalaureate degree
13 than are students with higher incomes.

14 “(2) Even among students with above average
15 grades, low-income students are still more likely to
16 leave a 4-year institution of higher education with-
17 out a baccalaureate degree than are students with
18 higher incomes, especially low-income students en-
19 rolled at private institutions.

20 “(3) This lack of persistence to completion of a
21 baccalaureate degree continues to contribute to the
22 gap in educational attainment and ultimate income
23 levels between disadvantaged students and their
24 more affluent classmates.

25 “(4) While the focus of Federal student finan-
26 cial assistance and higher education programs has

1 traditionally been to ensure access to postsecondary
2 education, the Federal Government should expand
3 its role in student financial assistance programs for
4 postsecondary education to address this lack of per-
5 sistence to baccalaureate degree completion.

6 “(5) The amount of grant assistance provided
7 to postsecondary students is critical to their persist-
8 ence and degree attainment.

9 “(6) In addition to economic disadvantage, the
10 following factors significantly contribute to a student
11 dropping out of a 4-year institution of higher edu-
12 cation:

13 “(A) A delayed entry into postsecondary
14 education after graduating from high school.

15 “(B) A low grade point average.

16 “(C) Working full-time while enrolled.

17 “(D) Being a first-generation college stu-
18 dent.

19 “(E) Being less engaged with an academic
20 program.

21 “(7) Most students who drop out of college,
22 particularly those at the greatest risk of leaving
23 their programs of study without a baccalaureate de-
24 gree, do so during the first 2 years of study.

1 “(8) At-risk students who receive targeted aca-
2 demic support services persist to degree completion
3 at higher rates than at-risk students who do not re-
4 ceive such services.

5 “(9) Educators interested in student retention
6 have long viewed intensive academic summer pro-
7 grams for incoming first-year students as very im-
8 portant in helping students from disadvantaged
9 backgrounds become acclimated to college life and in
10 improving retention.

11 **“SEC. 408B. PURPOSE AND PROGRAM AUTHORITY.**

12 “(a) PURPOSE.—The purpose of this program is to
13 assist institutions of higher education to help students who
14 are at risk of ending their postsecondary education prior
15 to obtaining baccalaureate degrees, particularly those who
16 are economically disadvantaged, to stay in school until
17 they obtain those degrees.

18 “(b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—From funds appro-
19 priated pursuant to section 408G for each fiscal year, the
20 Secretary is authorized, in accordance with the require-
21 ments of this chapter, to award competitive grants to eligi-
22 ble institutions to enable them to pay the Federal share
23 of the costs of carrying out programs designed to meet
24 the purpose of this chapter.

1 “(c) DURATION OF GRANT.—A grant made under
2 this chapter shall be awarded for a period of 3 years.

3 **“SEC. 408C. INSTITUTIONAL ELIGIBILITY.**

4 “(a) IN GENERAL.—An institution of higher edu-
5 cation is eligible to receive a grant under this chapter if
6 the institution—

7 “(1) meets the requirements of section 102; and

8 “(2) awards baccalaureate degrees, or, subject
9 to subsection (b)(1), associate degrees.

10 “(b) LIMITATIONS.—

11 “(1) ASSOCIATE DEGREE-GRANTING INSTITU-
12 TIONS.—An eligible applicant that awards only asso-
13 ciate degrees may apply for a grant under this chap-
14 ter only as part of a consortium that includes one
15 or more institutions of higher education that awards
16 baccalaureate degrees.

17 “(2) MULTIPLE GRANTS.—An institution that
18 receives a grant under this chapter may compete to
19 receive a subsequent grant, but may not receive
20 more than two grants under this chapter.

21 **“SEC. 408D. APPLICATION PROCESS.**

22 “(a) IN GENERAL.—

23 “(1) ____.—Each eligible applicant that desires
24 a grant under this chapter shall submit to the Sec-
25 retary an application for that grant at such time

1 and containing such information as the Secretary
2 may prescribe.

3 “(2) DEMONSTRATION OF PRIOR COMMIT-
4 MENT.—In order to receive a grant under this chap-
5 ter, an applicant shall demonstrate in its application,
6 to the satisfaction of the Secretary, its successful
7 prior commitment to the purposes of this chapter,
8 through the prior support of at least one of the ac-
9 tivities described in section 408E(a).

10 “(b) MATCHING REQUIREMENT.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Federal share of the
12 cost of programs assisted under this chapter shall
13 not be more than 50 percent, and the matching
14 funds shall be from non-Federal sources.

15 “(2) CONSORTIA.—The Secretary may establish
16 in regulations the matching requirement applicable
17 to a consortium of institutions in which some of the
18 institutions are eligible for a waiver of the matching
19 requirement pursuant to section 395 or section 515.

20 “(c) COORDINATION REQUIREMENT.—Each eligible
21 institution shall ensure that the activities provided under
22 this chapter are, to the extent practicable, coordinated
23 with, complement, and enhance related services under
24 other Federal and non-Federal programs, and do not du-
25 plicate the services already provided at that institution.

1 “(d) SUPPLEMENT, NOT SUPPLANT.—Funds under
2 this chapter shall be used to supplement, and not sup-
3 plant, non-Federal funds expended for existing programs.

4 **“SEC. 408E. AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.**

5 “(a) IN GENERAL.—An eligible institution that re-
6 ceives a grant under this chapter shall, except as provided
7 in subsection (b), use the grant to provide services or as-
8 sistance to students at risk of leaving their programs of
9 study without baccalaureate degrees, particularly economi-
10 cally disadvantaged students, by carrying out one or more
11 of the following:

12 “(1) Implementing an intensive summer pro-
13 gram for incoming first-year students (or students
14 entering their second or third year of postsecondary
15 education if the institution can demonstrate that it
16 is addressing the needs of first-year students and
17 that a summer program could help retention of
18 second- or third-year students at risk of dropping
19 out), provided that the institution demonstrates in
20 its application that it has a strong commitment to
21 student retention through additional activities.

22 “(2) Developing a strong student support serv-
23 ice program, targeted to students in their first 2
24 years of postsecondary education, that includes ac-
25 tivities such as—

1 “(A) peer tutoring;

2 “(B) mentoring programs involving faculty
3 and upper class students;

4 “(C) activities to assist students currently
5 enrolled in a 2-year institution to secure admis-
6 sion and financial assistance in a 4-year pro-
7 gram of postsecondary education;

8 “(D) activities to assist students in secur-
9 ing admission and financial assistance for en-
10 rollment in graduate and professional programs;
11 and

12 “(E) assistance in course selection.

13 “(3) Providing grants to students in their first
14 2 years of postsecondary education, in an amount
15 not less than required under subsection (c), except
16 that a recipient that provides grants under this
17 paragraph shall also provide services under para-
18 graphs (1) or (2), or both.

19 “(b) SPECIAL RULE.—A recipient of funds under this
20 chapter may serve students who have completed their first
21 2 years of postsecondary education if it demonstrates in
22 its application, to the satisfaction of the Secretary, that—

23 “(1) these students are at high risk of dropping
24 out; and

1 “(2) it will first meet the needs of all its eligible
2 first- and second-year students for services under
3 this chapter.

4 “(c) GRANT SIZE.—

5 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may, by reg-
6 ulation, establish minimum student grant award lev-
7 els for purposes of subsection (a)(3), taking into ac-
8 count such factors as the different costs of attend-
9 ance associated with public and private institutions.

10 “(2) EXCEPTION.—If the Secretary does not es-
11 tablish minimum student grant award levels under
12 paragraph (1), or if an institution wishes to provide
13 grants under subsection (a)(3) in an amount less
14 than the minimum set by the Secretary, the institu-
15 tion shall demonstrate in its application, to the satis-
16 faction of the Secretary, that the size of the grants
17 it will provide is appropriate and likely to have a sig-
18 nificant effect on the persistence problem at that in-
19 stitution.

20 **“SEC. 408F. RELATION TO OTHER FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE.**

21 “A grant provided to a student by an eligible institu-
22 tion from an award made under this chapter shall not be
23 considered in determining that student’s need for grant
24 or work assistance under this title, except that in no case
25 shall the total amount of student financial assistance

1 awarded to a student under this title exceed that student's
2 cost of attendance, as defined by section 472.

3 **“SEC. 408G. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

4 “(a) IN GENERAL.—There are authorized to be ap-
5 propriated to carry out this chapter \$35,000,000 for fiscal
6 year 2000, and such sums as may be necessary for each
7 of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.—

8 “(b) SPECIAL RULE.—From the amounts appro-
9 priated under subsection (a) for any fiscal year, the Sec-
10 retary may reserve up to 1 percent of such amount for
11 that fiscal year in order to carry out an evaluation of the
12 program authorized by this chapter.”.

13 **SEC. 3. EFFECTIVE DATE.**

14 The amendment made by section 2 shall be effective
15 on October 1, 1999.

○