

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 1467

To establish an Early Federal Pell Grant Commitment Demonstration Program.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2007

Mr. BIDEN introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To establish an Early Federal Pell Grant Commitment Demonstration Program.

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. EARLY FEDERAL PELL GRANT COMMITMENT**

4 **DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

5 Subpart 1 of part A of title IV of the Higher Edu-
6 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et seq.) is amended
7 by adding at the end the following:

8 **“SEC. 401B. EARLY FEDERAL PELL GRANT COMMITMENT**

9 **DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM.**

10 **“(a) DEMONSTRATION PROGRAM AUTHORITY.—**

1 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary is authorized
2 to carry out an Early Federal Pell Grant Commit-
3 ment Demonstration Program under which—

4 “(A) the Secretary awards grants to 4
5 State educational agencies, in accordance with
6 paragraph (2), to pay the administrative ex-
7 penses incurred in participating in the dem-
8 onstration program under this section; and

9 “(B) the Secretary awards Federal Pell
10 Grants to participating students in accordance
11 with this section.

12 “(2) GRANTS.—

13 “(A) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appro-
14 priated under subsection (g) for a fiscal year,
15 the Secretary is authorized to award grants to
16 4 State educational agencies to enable the State
17 educational agencies to pay the administrative
18 expenses incurred in participating in a dem-
19 onstration program under which students in 8th
20 grade who are eligible for a free or reduced
21 price meal receive a commitment to receive a
22 Federal Pell Grant early in their academic ca-
23 reers.

24 “(B) EQUAL AMOUNTS.—The Secretary
25 shall award grants under this section in equal

1 amounts to each of the 4 participating State
2 educational agencies.

3 “(b) DEMONSTRATION PROJECT REQUIREMENTS.—
4 Each of the 4 demonstration projects assisted under this
5 section shall meet the following requirements:

6 “(1) PARTICIPANTS.—

7 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The State educational
8 agency shall make participation in the dem-
9 onstration project available to 2 cohorts of stu-
10 dents, which shall consist of—

11 “(i) 1 cohort of 8th grade students
12 who begin the participation in academic
13 year 2007–2008; and

14 “(ii) 1 cohort of 8th grade students
15 who begin the participation in academic
16 year 2008–2009.

17 “(B) STUDENTS IN EACH COHORT.—Each
18 cohort of students shall consist of not more
19 than 10,000 8th grade students who qualify for
20 a free or reduced price meal under the Richard
21 B. Russell National School Lunch Act or the
22 Child Nutrition Act of 1966.

23 “(2) STUDENT DATA.—The State educational
24 agency shall ensure that student data from local
25 educational agencies serving students who partici-

1 pate in the demonstration project, as well as student
 2 data from local educational agencies serving a com-
 3 parable group of students who do not participate in
 4 the demonstration project, are available for evalua-
 5 tion of the demonstration project.

6 “(3) FEDERAL PELL GRANT COMMITMENT.—
 7 Each student who participates in the demonstration
 8 project receives a commitment from the Secretary to
 9 receive a Federal Pell Grant during the first aca-
 10 demic year that student is in attendance at an insti-
 11 tution of higher education as an undergraduate, if
 12 the student applies for Federal financial aid (via the
 13 FAFSA) during the student’s senior year of sec-
 14 ondary school and during succeeding years.

15 “(4) APPLICABILITY OF FEDERAL PELL GRANT
 16 REQUIREMENTS.—The requirements of section 401
 17 shall apply to Federal Pell Grants awarded pursuant
 18 to this section, except that the amount of each par-
 19 ticipating student’s Federal Pell Grant only shall be
 20 calculated by deeming such student to have an ex-
 21 pected family contribution equal to zero.

22 “(5) APPLICATION PROCESS.—The Secretary
 23 shall establish an application process to select State
 24 educational agencies to participate in the demonstra-
 25 tion program and State educational agencies shall

1 establish an application process to select local edu-
2 cational agencies within the State to participate in
3 the demonstration project.

4 “(6) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY PARTICIPA-
5 TION.—Subject to the 10,000 statewide student limi-
6 tation described in paragraph (1), a local edu-
7 cational agency serving students, not less than 50
8 percent of whom are eligible for a free or reduced
9 price meal under the Richard B. Russell National
10 School Lunch Act or the Child Nutritional Act of
11 1966, shall be eligible to participate in the dem-
12 onstration project.

13 “(c) STATE EDUCATIONAL AGENCY APPLICA-
14 TIONS.—

15 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational
16 agency desiring to participate in the demonstration
17 program under this section shall submit an applica-
18 tion to the Secretary at such time and in such man-
19 ner as the Secretary may require.

20 “(2) CONTENTS.—Each application shall in-
21 clude—

22 “(A) a description of the proposed targeted
23 information campaign for the demonstration
24 project and a copy of the plan described in sub-
25 section (f)(2);

1 “(B) a description of the student popu-
 2 lation that will receive an early commitment to
 3 receive a Federal Pell Grant under this section;

4 “(C) an assurance that the State edu-
 5 cational agency will fully cooperate with the on-
 6 going evaluation of the demonstration project;
 7 and

8 “(D) such other information as the Sec-
 9 retary may require.

10 “(d) SELECTION CONSIDERATIONS.—

11 “(1) SELECTION OF STATE EDUCATIONAL
 12 AGENCIES.—In selecting State educational agencies
 13 to participate in the demonstration program, the
 14 Secretary shall consider—

15 “(A) the number and quality of State edu-
 16 cational agency applications received;

17 “(B) the Department’s capacity to oversee
 18 and monitor each State educational agency’s
 19 participation in the demonstration program;

20 “(C) a State educational agency’s—

21 “(i) financial responsibility;

22 “(ii) administrative capability;

23 “(iii) commitment to focusing State
 24 resources, in addition to any resources pro-
 25 vided under part A of title I of the Ele-

mentary and Secondary Education Act of
1965, on students who receive assistance
under such part A;

“(iv) the ability and plans of a State
educational agency to run an effective and
thorough targeted information campaign
for students served by local educational
agencies eligible to participate in the dem-
onstration project; and

“(v) ensuring the participation in the
demonstration program of a diverse group
of students with respect to ethnicity and
gender.

“(2) LOCAL EDUCATIONAL AGENCY.—In select-
ing local educational agencies to participate in a
demonstration project under this section, the State
educational agency shall consider—

“(A) the number and quality of local edu-
cational agency applications received;

“(B) the State educational agency’s capac-
ity to oversee and monitor each local edu-
cational agency’s participation in the dem-
onstration project;

“(C) a local educational agency’s—

“(i) financial responsibility;

1 “(ii) administrative capability;

2 “(iii) commitment to focusing local re-
3 sources, in addition to any resources pro-
4 vided under part A of title I of the Ele-
5 mentary and Secondary Education Act of
6 1965, on students who receive assistance
7 under such part A;

8 “(iv) the ability and plans of a local
9 educational agency to run an effective and
10 thorough targeted information campaign
11 for students served by the local educational
12 agency; and

13 “(v) ensuring the participation in the
14 demonstration project of a diverse group of
15 students with respect to ethnicity and gen-
16 der.

17 “(e) EVALUATION.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—From amounts appro-
19 priated under section (g) for a fiscal year, the Sec-
20 retary shall reserve not more than \$1,000,000 to
21 award a grant or contract to an organization outside
22 the Department for an independent evaluation of the
23 impact of the demonstration program assisted under
24 this section.

1 “(2) COMPETITIVE BASIS.—The grant or con-
2 tract shall be awarded on a competitive basis.

3 “(3) MATTERS EVALUATED.—The evaluation
4 described in this subsection shall—

5 “(A) determine the number of individuals
6 who were encouraged by the demonstration pro-
7 gram to pursue higher education;

8 “(B) identify the barriers to the effective-
9 ness of the demonstration program;

10 “(C) assess the cost-effectiveness of the
11 demonstration program in improving access to
12 higher education;

13 “(D) identify the reasons why participants
14 in the demonstration program either received or
15 did not receive a Federal Pell Grant;

16 “(E) identify intermediate outcomes (rel-
17 ative to postsecondary education attendance),
18 such as whether participants—

19 “(i) were more likely to take a college-
20 prep curriculum while in secondary school;

21 “(ii) submitted any college applica-
22 tions; and

23 “(iii) took the PSAT, SAT, or ACT;

24 “(F) identify the number of individuals
25 participating in the demonstration program who

1 pursued an associate's degree or a bachelor's
2 degree, as well as other forms of postsecondary
3 education;

4 “(G) compare the findings of the dem-
5 onstration program with respect to participants
6 to comparison groups (of similar size and demo-
7 graphics) that did not participate in the dem-
8 onstration program; and

9 “(H) identify the impact on the parents of
10 students eligible to participate in the dem-
11 onstration program.

12 “(4) DISSEMINATION.—The findings of the
13 evaluation shall be widely disseminated to the public
14 by the organization conducting the evaluation as well
15 as by the Secretary.

16 “(f) TARGETED INFORMATION CAMPAIGN.—

17 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Each State educational
18 agency receiving a grant under this section shall, in
19 cooperation with the participating local educational
20 agencies within the State and the Secretary, develop
21 a targeted information campaign for the demonstra-
22 tion program assisted under this section.

23 “(2) PLAN.—Each State educational agency re-
24 ceiving a grant under this section shall include in
25 the application submitted under subsection (c) a

1 written plan for their proposed targeted information
2 campaign. The plan shall include the following:

3 “(A) OUTREACH.—Outreach to students
4 and their families, at a minimum, at the begin-
5 ning and end of each academic year of the dem-
6 onstration project.

7 “(B) DISTRIBUTION.—How the State edu-
8 cational agency plans to provide the outreach
9 described in subparagraph (A) and to provide
10 the information described in subparagraph (C).

11 “(C) INFORMATION.—The annual provi-
12 sion by the State educational agency to all stu-
13 dents and families participating in the dem-
14 onstration program of information regarding—

15 “(i) the estimated statewide average
16 higher education institution cost data for
17 each academic year, which cost data shall
18 be disaggregated by—

19 “(I) type of institution, includ-
20 ing—

21 “(aa) 2-year public colleges;

22 “(bb) 4-year public colleges;

23 and

24 “(cc) 4-year private colleges;

25 “(II) by component, including—

1 “(aa) tuition and fees; and

2 “(bb) room and board;

3 “(ii) Federal Pell Grants, including—

4 “(I) the maximum Federal Pell
5 Grant for each academic year;

6 “(II) when and how to apply for
7 a Federal Pell Grant; and

8 “(III) what the application proc-
9 ess for a Federal Pell Grant requires;

10 “(iii) State-specific college savings
11 programs;

12 “(iv) State-based merit aid;

13 “(v) State-based financial aid; and

14 “(vi) Federal financial aid available to
15 students, including eligibility criteria for
16 the Federal financial aid and an expla-
17 nation of the Federal financial aid pro-
18 grams.

19 “(3) COHORTS.—The information described in
20 paragraph (2)(C) shall be provided to 2 cohorts of
21 students annually for the duration of the students’
22 participation in the demonstration program. The 2
23 cohorts shall consist of—

1 “(A) 1 cohort of 8th grade students who
2 begin the participation in academic year 2007–
3 2008; and

4 “(B) 1 cohort of 8th grade students who
5 begin the participation in academic year 2008–
6 2009.

7 “(4) RESERVATION.—Each State educational
8 agency receiving a grant under this section shall re-
9 serve \$200,000 of the grant funds received each fis-
10 cal year for each of the 2 cohorts of students (for
11 a total reservation of \$400,000 each fiscal year)
12 served by the State to carry out their targeted infor-
13 mation campaign described in this subsection.

14 “(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
15 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this sec-
16 tion—

17 “(1) \$1,300,000 for fiscal year 2008, of
18 which—

19 “(A) \$500,000 shall be available to carry
20 out subsection (e); and

21 “(B) \$800,000 shall be available to carry
22 out subsection (f)(2)(C);

23 “(2) \$1,600,000 for fiscal year 2009, of which
24 \$1,600,000 shall be available to carry out subsection
25 (f)(2)(C);

1 “(3) \$1,600,000 for fiscal year 2010, of which
2 \$1,600,000 shall be available to carry out subsection
3 (f)(2)(C);

4 “(4) \$2,100,000 for fiscal year 2011, of
5 which—

6 “(A) \$500,000 shall be available to carry
7 out subsection (e); and

8 “(B) \$1,600,000 shall be available to carry
9 out subsection (f)(2)(C);

10 “(5) \$1,600,000 for fiscal year 2012, of which
11 \$1,600,000 shall be available to carry out subsection
12 (f)(2)(C);

13 “(6) \$14,600,000 for fiscal year 2013, of
14 which—

15 “(A) \$800,000 shall be available to carry
16 out subsection (f)(2)(C); and

17 “(B) \$13,800,000 shall be available for
18 Federal Pell Grants provided in accordance
19 with this section; and

20 “(7) \$13,800,000 for fiscal year 2014, of which
21 \$13,800,000 shall be available for Federal Pell
22 Grants provided in accordance with this section.”.

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