

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. 2834

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 7, 2012

Mr. BROWN of Massachusetts introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to extend the reduced interest rate for Federal Direct Stafford Loans, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Subsidized Stafford
5 Loan Reduced Interest Rate Extension Act of 2012”.

**TITLE I—EXTENSION OF
REDUCED INTEREST RATE**

SEC. 101. INTEREST RATE EXTENSION.

Section 455(b)(7)(D) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(b)(7)(D)) is amended—

(1) in the matter preceding clause (i), by striking “and before July 1, 2012,” and inserting “and before July 1, 2013,”; and

(2) in clause (v), by striking “and before July 1, 2012,” and inserting “and before July 1, 2013,”.

**TITLE II—IMPROPER PAYMENTS
ELIMINATION AND RECOVERY
IMPROVEMENT**

SEC. 201. SHORT TITLE.

This title may be cited as the “Improper Payments Elimination and Recovery Improvement Act of 2012”.

SEC. 202. DEFINITION.

In this title, the term “agency” means an executive agency defined under section 105 of title 5, United States Code.

**SEC. 203. IMPROVING THE DETERMINATION OF IMPROPER
PAYMENTS BY FEDERAL AGENCIES.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of Management and Budget shall on an annual basis—

1 (1) identify a list of high-priority Federal pro-
2 grams for greater levels of oversight and review—

3 (A) in which the highest dollar value or
4 majority of governmentwide improper payments
5 occur; or

6 (B) for which there is a higher risk of im-
7 proper payments;

8 (2) in coordination with the agency responsible
9 for administering the high-priority program—

10 (A) establish semi-annual or quarterly tar-
11 gets and actions for reducing improper pay-
12 ments associated with each high-priority pro-
13 gram; or

14 (B) if such targets are in effect on the
15 date of enactment of this Act, establish supple-
16 mental targets; and

17 (3) determine the entities that have received the
18 greatest amount of improper payments (or, if im-
19 proper payments are identified solely on the basis of
20 a sample, the entities that have received the greatest
21 amount of improper payments in the applicable sam-
22 ple).

23 (b) REPORT ON HIGH-DOLLAR IMPROPER PAY-
24 MENTS.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to Federal privacy
2 policies and to the extent permitted by law, each
3 agency on a quarterly basis shall submit to the In-
4 spector General of that agency, and make available
5 to the public (including availability through the
6 Internet), a report on any high-dollar improper pay-
7 ments identified by the agency.

8 (2) CONTENTS.—Each report under this sub-
9 section—

10 (A) shall describe—

11 (i) any action the agency—

12 (I) has taken or plans to take to
13 recover improper payments; and

14 (II) intends to take to prevent
15 future improper payments; and

16 (B) shall not include any referrals the
17 agency made or anticipates making to the De-
18 partment of Justice, or any information pro-
19 vided in connection with such referrals.

20 (3) AVAILABILITY OF INFORMATION TO INSPEC-
21 TOR GENERAL.—Paragraph (2)(B) shall not prohibit
22 any referral or information being made available to
23 an Inspector General as otherwise provided by law.

1 (4) ASSESSMENT.—After the review of each re-
2 port under this subsection, the Inspector General
3 shall—

4 (A) assess the level of risk associated with
5 the applicable program and the quality of the
6 improper payment estimates and methodology
7 of the agency;

8 (B) determine the extent of additional
9 oversight or financial controls warranted to
10 identify and prevent improper payments; and

11 (C) provide the head of the agency with
12 any recommendations, for modifying any plans
13 of the agency, including improvements for im-
14 proper payments determination and estimation
15 methodology.

16 (c) IMPROVED ESTIMATES.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days
18 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director
19 of the Office of Management and Budget shall pro-
20 vide guidance to agencies for improving the esti-
21 mates of improper payments under the Improper
22 Payments Information Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321
23 note).

24 (2) GUIDANCE.—Guidance under this sub-
25 section shall—

1 (A) strengthen the estimation process of
2 agencies by reviewing the underlying validity of
3 payments to ensure amounts being billed are
4 proper; and

5 (B) include—

6 (i) access to more complete data as
7 part of reviews;

8 (ii) ending reliance on self-reporting
9 of improper payments as a replacement for
10 estimates, and relying on the development
11 of a robust process to estimate and iden-
12 tify improper payments across the agency;

13 (iii) all overpayments in the improper
14 payments estimate, regardless of whether
15 improperly paid funds have been or are
16 being recovered;

17 (iv) ensuring that—

18 (I) the review of payments to em-
19 ployees shall include analysis of em-
20 ployee data, including pay grade data,
21 locality pay, and other factors that af-
22 fect pay; and

23 (II) reviews address high-risk or
24 high-dollar personnel payments, in-

1 including travel, pay, and purchase
2 cards;

3 (v) reassessing high-risk programs to
4 better reflect the unique processes, proce-
5 dures, and risks of improper payments, in-
6 cluding assessments for each program to
7 reflect different risk components and bet-
8 ter direct corrective actions; and

9 (vi) confirming that inter-agency
10 transfers are proper using a methodology
11 comparable to that used to assess program
12 level improper payments.

13 **SEC. 204. IMPROPER PAYMENTS INFORMATION.**

14 Section 2(a)(3)(A)(ii) of the Improper Payments In-
15 formation Act of 2002 (31 U.S.C. 3321 note) is amended
16 by striking “with respect to fiscal years following Sep-
17 tember 30th of a fiscal year beginning before fiscal year
18 2013 as determined by the Office of Management and
19 Budget” and inserting “with respect to fiscal year 2014
20 and each fiscal year thereafter”.

21 **SEC. 205. DO NOT PAY INITIATIVE.**

22 (a) PREPAYMENT AND PREAWARD PROCEDURES.—
23 (1) IN GENERAL.—Each agency shall review
24 prepayment and preaward procedures and ensure
25 that a thorough review of available databases with

1 relevant information on eligibility occurs to deter-
2 mine program or award eligibility and prevent im-
3 proper payments before the release of any Federal
4 funds, to the extent permitted by law.

5 (2) DATABASES.—At a minimum, each agency
6 shall, before payment and award, check the following
7 databases (if applicable and permitted by law) to
8 verify eligibility:

9 (A) The Death Master File of the Social
10 Security Administration.

11 (B) The General Services Administration's
12 Excluded Parties List System.

13 (C) The Debt Check Database of the De-
14 partment of the Treasury.

15 (D) The Credit Alert System or Credit
16 Alert Interactive Voice Response System of the
17 Department of Housing and Urban Develop-
18 ment.

19 (E) The List of Excluded Individuals/Enti-
20 ties of the Office of Inspector General of the
21 Department of Health and Human Services.

22 (b) DO NOT PAY LIST.—

23 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established the
24 Do Not Pay List which shall consist of—

1 (A) the databases described under sub-
2 section (a)(2); and

3 (B) any other database designated by the
4 Director of the Office of Management and
5 Budget in consultation with agencies.

6 (2) OTHER DATABASES.—In making designa-
7 tions of other databases under paragraph (1)(B), the
8 Director of the Office of Management and Budget
9 shall consider—

10 (A) any database that assists in preventing
11 improper payments; and

12 (B) the database of incarcerated individ-
13 uals established under subsection (f).

14 (3) ACCESS AND REVIEW BY AGENCIES.—For
15 purposes of identifying and preventing improper
16 payment, each agency shall have access to, and use
17 of, the Do Not Pay List to determine payment or
18 award eligibility when the Director of the Office of
19 Management and Budget determines the Do Not
20 Pay List is appropriately established for the agency.

21 (4) PAYMENT OTHERWISE REQUIRED.—When
22 using the Do Not Pay List, an agency shall recog-
23 nize that there may be circumstances under which
24 the law requires a payment or award to be made to

1 a recipient, regardless of whether that recipient is on
2 the Do Not Pay List.

3 (c) DATABASE INTEGRATION PLAN.—Not later than
4 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Direc-
5 tor of the Office of Management and Budget shall provide
6 to the Congress a plan for—

7 (1) inclusion of other databases on the Do Not
8 Pay List;

9 (2) to the extent permitted by law, agency ac-
10 cess to the Do Not Pay List; and

11 (3) the multilateral data use agreements de-
12 scribed under subsection (e).

13 (d) INITIAL WORKING SYSTEM.—

14 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days
15 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director
16 of the Office of Management and Budget shall es-
17 tablish a working system for prepayment and
18 preaward review that includes the Do Not Pay List
19 as described under this section.

20 (2) INITIAL SYSTEM.—The working system es-
21 tablished under paragraph (1)—

22 (A) may be located within an appropriate
23 agency;

24 (B) shall include not less than 3 agencies;

1 (C) shall include fraud and improper pay-
2 ments detection through predictive modeling
3 and other analytic technologies and other tech-
4 niques; and

5 (D) may provide for the use of commercial
6 database sources, commercial analysis, and
7 other functionality for payment or award re-
8 views, as determined appropriate by the Direc-
9 tor of the Office of Management and Budget
10 for verifying Federal data.

11 (3) APPLICATION TO ALL AGENCIES.—Not later
12 than January 1, 2013, each agency shall review all
13 payments and awards for all programs of that agen-
14 cy through the system established under this sub-
15 section.

16 (e) MULTILATERAL DATA USE AGREEMENTS.—

17 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 60 days after
18 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of
19 the Office of Management and Budget shall develop
20 a plan to establish a multilateral data use agreement
21 authority to carry out this section, including access
22 to databases such as the New Hire Database under
23 section 453(j) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
24 653(j)).

25 (2) GENERAL PROTOCOLS AND SECURITY.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—The multilateral data
2 use agreements shall be consistent with proto-
3 cols to ensure the secure transfer and storage
4 of any data provided to another entity or indi-
5 vidual—

6 (i) under the provisions of, or amend-
7 ments made by, this section; and

8 (ii) consistent with applicable informa-
9 tion, privacy, security, and disclosure laws,
10 including—

11 (I) the regulations promulgated
12 under the Health Insurance Port-
13 ability and Accountability Act of 1996
14 and section 552a of title 5, United
15 States Code; and

16 (II) subject to any information
17 systems security requirements under
18 such laws or otherwise required by the
19 Director of the Office of Management
20 and Budget.

21 (B) CONSULTATION.—The Director of the
22 Office of Management and Budget shall consult
23 with—

1 (i) the Council of Inspectors General
2 on Integrity and Efficiency before imple-
3 menting this paragraph; and

4 (ii) the Secretary of Health and
5 Human Services, the Social Security Ad-
6 ministrator, and the head of any other
7 agency, as appropriate.

8 (f) DEVELOPMENT AND ACCESS TO A DATABASE OF
9 INCARCERATED INDIVIDUALS.—

10 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General shall
11 develop and maintain a database of individuals in-
12 carcerated at Federal and State facilities.

13 (2) AVAILABILITY AND UPDATE.—The database
14 developed under this subsection shall be—

15 (A) available to agencies to carry out this
16 section and prevent waste, fraud, and abuse;
17 and

18 (B) updated no less frequently than on a
19 weekly basis.

20 (g) PLAN TO IMPROVE THE SOCIAL SECURITY AD-
21 MINISTRATION DEATH MASTER FILE.—

22 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—In conjunction with the
23 Commissioner of Social Security and in consultation
24 with stakeholders and the States, the Director of the
25 Office of Management and Budget, shall establish a

1 plan for improving the quality and timeliness of
2 death data maintained by the Social Security Ad-
3 ministration, including death information reported to
4 the Commissioner under section 205(r) of the Social
5 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 405(r)).

6 (2) ACTIONS UNDER PLAN.—The plan estab-
7 lished under this subsection shall include actions
8 agencies are required to take to—

9 (A) increase the quality and frequency of
10 access;

11 (B) achieve a goal of at least daily access
12 as appropriate; and

13 (C) provide for all States to use modern,
14 electronic means for providing data.

15 (3) REPORT.—Not later than 120 days after
16 the date of enactment of this Act, the Director of
17 the Office of Management and Budget shall submit
18 a report to Congress on the plan established under
19 this subsection, including recommended legislation.

20 **SEC. 206. IMPROVING RECOVERY OF IMPROPER PAYMENTS.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Office of
22 Management and Budget shall determine—

23 (1) current and historical rates and amounts of
24 recovery of improper payments (or, in cases in which
25 improper payments are identified solely on the basis

1 of a sample, recovery rates and amounts estimated
2 on the basis of the applicable sample), including spe-
3 cific information of amounts and payments recovered
4 by recovery audit contractors; and

5 (2) targets for recovering improper payments,
6 including specific information on amounts and pay-
7 ments recovered by recovery audit contractors.

8 (b) RECOVERY AUDIT CONTRACTOR PROGRAMS.—

9 (1) ESTABLISHMENT.—Not later than 90 days
10 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Director
11 of the Office of Management and Budget shall es-
12 tablish a plan for no less than 10 Recovery Audit
13 Contracting programs for the purpose of identifying
14 and recovering overpayments and underpayments in
15 10 agencies.

16 (2) REVIEW OF COMMERCIAL PAYMENTS.—Of
17 the programs established under this subsection, 5
18 programs shall review commercial payments by an
19 agency.

20 (3) DURATION.—Any program established
21 under this subsection shall terminate not more than
22 3 years after the date on which the program is es-
23 tablished.

24 (4) REPORTS.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 3
2 months after the completion of a program, the
3 head of the agency conducting the program
4 shall submit a report on the program to Con-
5 gress.

6 (B) CONTENTS.—Each report under this
7 paragraph shall include—

8 (i) a description of the impact of the
9 program on savings and recoveries; and

10 (ii) such recommendations as the head
11 of the agency considers appropriate on ex-
12 tending or expanding the program.

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