

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1949

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2013

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education,
Labor, and Pensions

AN ACT

To direct the Secretary of Education to convene the Advisory Committee on Improving Postsecondary Education Data to conduct a study on improvements to postsecondary education transparency at the Federal level.

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

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Postsec-
3 ondary Education Data for Students Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. STUDY ON IMPROVEMENTS TO POSTSECONDARY**
5 **EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AT THE FED-**
6 **ERAL LEVEL.**

7 (a) **FORMATION OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON IM-**
8 **PROVING POSTSECONDARY EDUCATION DATA.—**

9 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 30 days after
10 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
11 Education shall convene the Advisory Committee on
12 Improving Postsecondary Education Data (in this
13 Act referred to as the “Advisory Committee”), which
14 shall be comprised of 15 members who represent
15 economically, racially, and geographically diverse
16 populations appointed by the Secretary in consulta-
17 tion with the Commissioner for Education Statistics,
18 including—

19 (A) individuals representing different sec-
20 tors of institutions of higher education, includ-
21 ing individuals representing undergraduate and
22 graduate education;

23 (B) experts in the field of higher education
24 policy;

25 (C) State officials;

1 (D) students and other stakeholders from
2 the higher education community;

3 (E) representatives from the business com-
4 munity;

5 (F) experts in choice in consumer markets;

6 (G) privacy experts;

7 (H) college and career counselors at sec-
8 ondary schools;

9 (I) experts in data policy, collection, and
10 use; and

11 (J) experts in labor markets.

12 (2) CHAIRPERSON.—The Secretary shall ap-
13 point the Chairperson of the Advisory Committee.

14 (b) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Advisory Committee
15 shall conduct a study examining—

16 (1) the types of information, including informa-
17 tion related to costs of postsecondary education,
18 sources of financial assistance (including Federal
19 student loans), student outcomes, and
20 postgraduation earnings, the Federal Government
21 should collect and report on institutions of higher
22 education to assist students and families in their
23 search for an institution of higher education;

24 (2) how such information should be collected
25 and reported, including how to disaggregate infor-

1 mation on student outcomes by subgroups of stu-
2 dents, such as full-time students, part-time students,
3 nontraditional students, first generation college stu-
4 dents, students who are veterans, and Federal Pell
5 Grant recipients under subpart 1 of part A of title
6 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C.
7 1070a); and

8 (3) the ways in which the Federal Government
9 may make such information more readily available
10 to—

11 (A) students and their families in a format
12 that is easily accessible and understandable,
13 and will aid students and their families in mak-
14 ing decisions; and

15 (B) States, local governments, secondary
16 schools, individual or groups of institutions of
17 higher education, and private-sector entities.

18 (c) SCOPE OF STUDY.—In conducting the study
19 under this Act, the Advisory Committee shall, at a min-
20 imum, examine—

21 (1) whether the current Federal transparency
22 initiatives on postsecondary education—

23 (A) are reporting consistent information
24 about individual institutions of higher education
25 across Federal agencies; and

1 (B) are similar to transparency initiatives
2 on postsecondary education carried out by
3 States, individual or groups of institutions of
4 higher education, or private-sector entities;

5 (2) whether—

6 (A) the collection and reporting of
7 postgraduation earnings by the Federal Govern-
8 ment is feasible, and if feasible, the options for
9 collecting and reporting such information;

10 (B) collecting and reporting such informa-
11 tion would improve the use of Federal trans-
12 parency initiatives and ease decisionmaking for
13 students and their families; and

14 (C) collecting and reporting such informa-
15 tion would have an impact on student privacy,
16 and if so, how such impact may be minimized;

17 (3) whether any other information, including in-
18 formation relating to student outcomes or identified
19 under the review required under subsection (d),
20 should be collected and reported by the Federal Gov-
21 ernment to improve the utility of such initiatives for
22 students and their families, and if so, how such in-
23 formation may be collected and reported, including
24 whether the information should be disaggregated by
25 subgroups of students;

1 (4) whether any information currently collected
2 and reported by the Federal Government on institu-
3 tions of higher education is not useful for students
4 and their families and should not be so collected and
5 reported;

6 (5) the manner in which the information from
7 Federal transparency initiatives is made available to
8 students and their families, and whether format
9 changes may help the information become more eas-
10 ily understood and widely utilized by students and
11 their families;

12 (6) any activities being carried out by the Fed-
13 eral Government, States, individual or groups of in-
14 stitutions of higher education, or private-sector enti-
15 ties to help inform students and their families of the
16 availability of Federal transparency initiatives;

17 (7) the cost to institutions of higher education
18 of reporting to the Federal Government the informa-
19 tion that is being collected and reported through
20 Federal transparency initiatives, and how such cost
21 may be minimized; and

22 (8) the relevant research described in sub-
23 section (d).

1 (d) REVIEW OF RELEVANT RESEARCH.—In con-
2 ducting the study under this Act, the Advisory Committee
3 shall review and consider—

4 (1) research and studies, if any, that have been
5 conducted to determine questions most frequently
6 asked by students and families to help inform their
7 search for an institution of higher education;

8 (2) the types of information students seek be-
9 fore enrolling in an institution of higher education;

10 (3) whether the availability to students and
11 their families of additional information on institu-
12 tions of higher education will be beneficial or con-
13 fusing;

14 (4) results, if any, that are available from con-
15 sumer testing of Federal, State, institution of higher
16 education, and private-sector transparency initiatives
17 on postsecondary education that have been made
18 publicly available on or after the date that is 10
19 years before the date of enactment of this Act; and

20 (5) any gaps in the research, studies, and re-
21 sults described in paragraphs (1) and (4) relating to
22 the types of information students seek before enroll-
23 ing in an institution of higher education.

24 (e) CONSULTATION.—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—In conducting the study
2 under this Act, the Advisory Committee shall—

3 (A) hold public hearings to consult with
4 parents and students; and

5 (B) consult with a broad range of inter-
6 ested parties in higher education, including ap-
7 propriate researchers, representatives of sec-
8 ondary schools (including college and career
9 counselors) and institutions of higher education
10 from different sectors of such institutions (in-
11 cluding undergraduate and graduate education),
12 State administrators, and Federal officials.

13 (2) CONSULTATION WITH THE AUTHORIZING
14 COMMITTEES.—The Advisory Committee shall con-
15 sult on a regular basis with the authorizing commit-
16 tees in conducting the study under this Act.

17 (f) REPORTS TO AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—

18 (1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180
19 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Ad-
20 visory Committee shall prepare and submit to the
21 authorizing committees and the Secretary an interim
22 report describing the progress made in conducting
23 the study under this Act and any preliminary find-
24 ings on the topics identified under subsection (c).

25 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

1 (A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year
2 after the date of enactment of this Act, the Ad-
3 visory Committee shall prepare and submit to
4 the authorizing committees and the Secretary a
5 final report on the study, including—

6 (i) recommendations for legislative,
7 regulatory, and administrative actions
8 based on findings related to the topics
9 identified under subsection (c); and

10 (ii) a summary of the research de-
11 scribed in subsection (d).

12 (B) CONSULTATION WITH NCES.—The
13 Advisory Committee shall consult with the Com-
14 missioner of Education Statistics prior to mak-
15 ing recommendations under subparagraph
16 (A)(i) with respect to improving the information
17 being collected and reported by the Federal
18 Government on institutions of higher education.

19 (g) AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS.—The amount nec-
20 essary to conduct the study under this Act shall be made
21 available from amounts available to the Secretary for ad-
22 ministrative expenses of the Department of Education.

23 (h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this Act:

24 (1) AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—The term
25 “authorizing committees” has the meaning given the

1 term in section 103 of the Higher Education Act of
2 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

3 (2) FIRST GENERATION COLLEGE STUDENT.—
4 The term “first generation college student” has the
5 meaning given the term in section 402A(h) of the
6 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a–
7 11(h)).

8 (3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The
9 term “institution of higher education” has the
10 meaning given the term in section 102 of the Higher
11 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002), except
12 that such term does not include institutions de-
13 scribed in subsection (a)(1)(C) of such section 102.

14 (4) SECONDARY SCHOOL.—The term “sec-
15 ondary school” has the meaning given the term in
16 section 9101 of the Elementary and Secondary Edu-
17 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

18 (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
19 the Secretary of Education.

20 (6) STATE.—The term “State” has the mean-
21 ing given the term in section 103 of the Higher
22 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

23 (7) STUDENT.—The term “student” includes—
24 (A) a prospective student;

1 (B) a student enrolled in an institution of
2 higher education;

3 (C) a nontraditional student (as defined in
4 section 803(j)(2) of the Higher Education Act
5 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1161c(j)(2))); and

6 (D) a veteran (as defined in section
7 480(c)(1) of such Act (20 U.S.C.
8 1087vv(c)(1))) who is a student or prospective
9 student.

Passed the House of Representatives May 22, 2013.

Attest:

KAREN L. HAAS,

Clerk.