

ADVANCING COMPETENCY-BASED
EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION
PROJECT ACT OF 2013

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on H.R. 3136.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Minnesota?

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 677 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill, H.R. 3136.

The Chair appoints the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. AMODEI) to preside over the Committee of the Whole.

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IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the consideration of the bill (H.R. 3136) to establish a demonstration program for competency-based education, with Mr. AMODEI in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to the rule, the bill is considered read the first time.

The gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in strong support of the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act of 2013.

Mr. Chairman, this week, Congress is moving forward with a bipartisan effort to strengthen our Nation's higher education system.

Across the country, millions of college students are getting ready to start the school year. They will soon say good-bye to family and friends and pursue their dream of a postsecondary education. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, many Americans are struggling to turn that dream into reality.

The higher education system we know today is too costly, too bureaucratic, and outdated. Some are having a hard time fitting the traditional college experience into a busy lifestyle that already includes work, family, or both. Others are graduating with a pile of debt and no job prospects.

A college degree can open the door to a bright and prosperous future, yet too often, obstacles stand in the way. Ultimately, States and institutions must provide the answers students and families need, but Congress has a role to play as well.

First and foremost, we need to continue promoting policies that will get

this economy moving again, so every college graduate who wants a job can find a job. We can also adopt common-sense reforms that will improve our higher education system.

Today, the House will begin to do just that. We have an opportunity right now—right now, Mr. Chairman—to advance reforms that will support innovation and empower students to make informed decisions about their college careers. H.R. 3136 is the first step in that effort.

The bipartisan Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act will allow institutions to expand an innovative approach to higher education, known as competency-based education.

This model of education defines a set of skills for a field of work and then measures student progress in acquiring those skills. Once a student demonstrates a level of skill or competency, he or she can move to the next step in the academic program.

Instead of awarding a student credit hours for time spent in class, competency-based education allows a student to learn at a pace tailored to his or her specific needs.

If you are a single mom, you may need more time to complete your degree while juggling the demands of work and kids, or if you are a dad out of a job with a family to support, 4 years sitting in a classroom is time you do not have.

Competency-based education holds tremendous promise. It allows students to earn a degree in less time and even at a lower cost than in a traditional education setting, yet it is difficult for institutions to expand this innovative model under a system that values time over learning.

H.R. 3136 will help us move in a different direction. The legislation directs the Secretary of Education to authorize a number of demonstration projects to test and strengthen competency-based education.

Among other provisions, the legislation requires the Secretary to focus on programs that are designed to reduce costs in the time it takes to earn a degree. The bill requires a thorough evaluation of each demonstration project, so policymakers learn which programs demonstrate success and what specific roadblocks are standing in the way.

Mr. Chairman, this is a good bill that will help make a difference in the lives of students and families. I want to thank the bipartisan authors of the legislation: Mr. MATT SALMON, Mr. JARED POLIS, and Mrs. SUSAN BROOKS.

I urge my colleagues to support the bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today to join my colleague in support of the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act of 2013, a bill that I had the honor to coauthor with Representative SALMON. I greatly appreciate his work,

as well as the work of many others on this bill.

This bill will help unleash innovation that promises to improve the quality of a college education and, just as importantly, if not more, reduce the cost. It will allow innovative colleges and universities to shorten the time it takes to earn a degree, reduce college costs through self-paced programs based on learning rather than time spent in the seat—and let's be honest, some of that time is often sleeping.

This innovation, which is called competency-based education, has a lot of promise. There is a lot to learn along the way, pitfalls to avoid. The benefits that we will learn over time promise to help allow students to work at their own pace and progress by mastering the knowledge of a course, which is essentially what the purpose of the course should be.

By demonstrating mastery of the course, regardless of how long it takes, we can, a, ensure employers that there is quality with regard to the outcomes of that course; and, b, reduce costs by allowing a student, if they are capable, to proceed faster.

This growing trend of innovation is very important because it provides a way to increase innovation and decrease costs. Since the last reauthorization in 2007, higher education has become more and more expensive.

Mr. Chairman, the cost of attending a university has risen by almost five times per student since 1983. At the same time that that cost has risen and a higher education has become harder and harder for American families to afford, the returns of a higher education have also increased.

College graduates who are working full time earn almost \$17,000 more a year annually than their peers who only have a high school diploma.

While a 4-year university degree isn't always the best option for everyone, some form of postsecondary education, whether it is a community college or whether it is a certification program, has become increasingly imperative to landing a good-paying job in the 21st century workforce.

Competency-based education can increase access to higher education for both nontraditional students, as well as college-age students—oftentimes who have a job—a family, and other commitments.

The National Center for Education Statistics reports that of the 17½ million people enrolled in college, only 15 percent were attending a 4-year college and living on campus.

So when we think about higher education and who is attending college, only 15 percent of those are having the experience I had or perhaps many of our colleagues had, where you go and you live in a dorm and you attend college for 4 years. That is only 15 percent.

The other 85 percent are doing something else. It might mean taking classes at night, it might mean online education, or it might mean taking

courses over a longer period of time. That has been the innovative center around cost reduction and improvements in quality.

H.R. 3136 will help align our higher education system with workforce needs. By providing a framework for measuring and assessing competencies, students are more likely to matriculate with the knowledge they actually need to master to be able to hold a good job.

Likewise, businesses will know what to expect upon hiring these students. That is why I am proud to say this legislation has garnered the support of the Chamber of Commerce, which has applauded competency-based education as an opportunity for employers to work with colleges to help identify skills and competencies for specific courses and programs.

This legislation, just as importantly, if not more, will help combat the rising cost of college. In higher education today, there are very few incentives for institutions to decrease costs.

To fully address this, we would need to do a reauthorization of the Higher Education Act—that is not what we have before us today—but we do have a constructive bill that will allow colleges and universities to adopt new technology, remove some of those barriers to innovation that exist today, and allow universities to look beyond delivering traditional classroom instruction, as they did in the 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, and look at what a classroom of the 21st century might look like beyond the walls of the physical classroom.

Competency-based education is one of the first innovations in higher education that is specifically designed to help decrease costs and make college more affordable, while also improving quality in terms of what the student has learned.

At its core, what we are talking about here today, competency-based education, flips the traditional campus model on its head, so that learning is the constant, and time and location are the variable and are self-paced.

The result is actually a more uniform and measurable education, ensuring that students actually learn what they are set out to learn versus sitting in a seat for a period of time.

Because competencies are demonstrable skills, schools can potentially form articulation agreements with one another even easier under this bill and under the innovation pilot programs allowed under this bill, saving students and taxpayers money and giving students and families more options, geographically and within a city.

I am thrilled that the Department of Education has done what they could to allow some programs to explore this model through their Experimental Sites Initiative, but there are several advantages to legislation.

First and foremost, we are able to expand the Experimental Sites Initiative from four programs to 20 under this

bill, and secondly, we are giving congressional bipartisan approval to this concept, which is far more enduring than the whim of a particular Secretary or a particular administration.

I am proud to say that institutions in my home district, like Colorado State University's Global Campus, are demonstrating that online public universities with competency-based programs can lead the way in attracting, educating, and graduating adult learners and other contemporary students and, at the same time, benefit the physical campus of the public university.

Colorado State University-Global Campus was created by the Colorado State University System Board of Governors in 2007 as the very first 100 percent online State university in the United States.

A longtime leader in academic innovation, CSU-Global already offers alternative credit options, including competency-based exams, which meet or exceed the rigorous academic standards required of a State university. These options help students to manage out-of-pocket expenses and reduce the overall cost of their education, while also rewarding them for their demonstration of knowledge.

However, CSU-Global and programs like it still need to adhere to the overly rigid higher education structure, which inhibits innovation by limiting schedules on which students can enroll and when students can receive financial aid.

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In order to continue to be successful and innovate, programs like CSU-Global need the flexibility that this bill enhances to meet their students' needs.

As Congress considers the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, this project is more crucial than ever. That is why I was proud to work with Representative SALMON on this legislation, which would permit institutions chosen by the Secretary to waive certain regulations that stand in the way of adopting competency-based models that reward both students and universities based on what students learn rather than how much time they sat in a seat, regardless of whether they are awake or asleep.

I want to thank Ranking Member MILLER and Chairman KLINE for working with my colleagues and I to craft this bipartisan bill that promises to increase innovation, increase equality, and decrease costs in higher education, and I strongly encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in voting "yes" on H.R. 3136 to support competency-based education and allow for laboratories of innovation across our great country as we all seek to reduce the costs and improve the quality of an increasingly important advanced education degree to help middle class families achieve their dreams in our country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ari-

zona (Mr. SALMON), a key member of the committee and one of the principal authors of this important legislation.

Mr. SALMON. Mr. Chairman, I rise in support of H.R. 3136, the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project of 2014.

I want to thank Chairman KLINE and Chairwoman FOXX for their support and work on this legislation. I also want to thank Congressman POLIS and Congresswoman BROOKS for working with me on this legislation.

College costs have risen dramatically over the last several years. To be exact, they have risen 500 percent since 1985. The average national tuition for this past school year was just over \$30,000, which represents 62 percent of the median annual income for my home State of Arizona. Even so, a college degree is still viewed as essential for success to many students and employers.

Throwing taxpayer dollars at the problem in the form of expanding loan forgiveness does not get at the heart of the problem or the solution of making college more affordable and is not a viable, long-term solution. Federal regulations continue to greatly impede efforts to reduce the cost of a degree. We need to implement policies that allow institutions to be innovative and try developing new models of education instead of continuing with the status quo.

H.R. 3136 will set up a pilot project to allow institutions to more easily develop innovative models of delivering education to students. I have been told before that all teachers don't teach the same and all students don't learn the same. We need to recognize this. This legislation is a step in allowing students to earn a college degree and enter the job market sooner—far sooner, in many cases—based on their knowledge and skill set rather than the amount of time that they spend in the classroom.

All students can benefit from such a program. However, this may be particularly beneficial to our Nation's veterans and nontraditional students. Our veterans return from duty with particular skills, and we should reward them for that by allowing them the ability to earn credits based on those skills and the learning that they have already received.

Similarly, nontraditional students often go back to school to finish their degree to get a better job, and they should be allowed to use the knowledge that they gain from their job to be able to advance their education and their degree.

Additionally, my legislation will incentivize students to work hard to accelerate their degree attainment, potentially cutting their overall education costs and allowing them to begin their careers sooner.

This bipartisan legislation, which passed out of committee by voice vote, allows schools to explore more innovative ways to deliver education, measure quality, and disburse financial aid

based on actual learning rather than seat time.

My bill will direct the Secretary of Education to implement a demonstration project and to waive certain regulatory requirements that impede such innovations that would decrease costs. The program would allow colleges to provide academic credit to students who can prove competencies through their prior work and life experiences and hard work, rather than a specified amount of time in the classroom.

This is a good first step to try to find ways to make a college education more affordable and more attainable for our Nation's students. I strongly encourage my colleagues to join me in supporting the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project of 2014.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, it is my honor to yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER), the ranking member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for all of his work on this legislation and joining Mr. SALMON in an effort to bring this to the floor. I thank both of them for reaching agreement on this. I also thank the chair of the committee, Mrs. BROOKS, and Mr. TIERNEY on our side, for this opportunity to vote on this legislation.

We have made a promise to America's students. We have said that we will make the cost of a college education affordable and accessible. With that comes another promise—the promise that when a student graduates with a college degree in hand, they will have the skills to succeed in the workplace and in the economy.

But the traditional college degree has not changed since the 1800s, as my colleagues have pointed out, despite dramatic changes for businesses and the workforce. We all know that a good middle class job requires some college education and training. And today, as most workers move from job to job more frequently, they need to tap new skills to keep up with the demands of emerging industries.

Despite the changing workforce needs, college credit is earned based upon the hours spent sitting in the classroom, not on the knowledge or the skills earned. Today, the Congress has an opportunity to vote for a new competency-based education model so we can flip the old model on its head.

This model is an opportunity for American students to access a high-quality education in a new way. And through technology and the Internet, this model becomes more user friendly and affordable for families.

I want to thank my colleague, Mr. TIERNEY, for his dedication on this issue. Mr. TIERNEY and I spent many hours with the leaders of this movement to understand how the Federal Government can support these innovative programs—and, in some cases,

where we can just get out of the way and let schools innovate.

In particular, I would like to thank the Lumina Foundation, New America, Southern New Hampshire University, Capella University, Cal State University, Open Learning Initiative, and San Jose State for their expertise on these programs.

This demonstration program makes sense because we need to test these innovations before we can make significant commitments of new Federal investments.

Specifically, this bill gives colleges a chance to create competency-based programs to help students succeed by measuring what they know and not solely the number of hours that they spent in the classroom.

Under this legislation, students will still learn the basic academic work, but this model allows them to become proficient at their own pace, potentially shortening the time it takes to earn a degree.

For the returning veteran, this could mean her Army medic skills are more easily transferred to an RN degree or some other medical degree. For a self-taught computer programmer, this could mean a computer science degree in a shorter timeframe and at less cost.

Combined with new technology, competency-based education is one of the most promising new innovations to help make college more affordable and more accessible. This is a very good step forward, and I urge the support of this legislation.

I also urge Members to support H.R. 4984, Empowering Students Through Enhanced Financial Counseling Act, a bill that would improve counseling on financial aid and student loans so that students can make more informed choices on how to finance their education.

While I support these bills, they are not enough for students already facing a mountain of college debt. I am disappointed that we are not voting today to help student loan borrowers save thousands of dollars and better manage their debt burden through lower interest rates.

My colleague, Congressman TIERNEY, offered an amendment at the Rules Committee to allow students to refinance student loans and to lock in lower interest rates, just like millions of Americans have been able to do with their mortgages or their car loans.

Unfortunately, the Republican leadership refused to make the Tierney amendment in order, thus blocking a straight up-or-down vote on whether or not to help millions of students and their families reduce their debt.

In closing, I want to thank Chairman KLINE and my Republican colleagues for their cooperation and inclusiveness on all of the higher education bills that we are considering this week. I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I will be the last speaker on our side, and will close. I think the other side has com-

pleted their speakers as well, so I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to inquire how much time remains on both sides.

The CHAIR. The gentleman from Colorado has 18 minutes remaining. The gentleman from Minnesota has 23½ minutes remaining.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I am very excited that, at a time when there are great divisions in this body on so many substantive issues that the American people want us to address, be it immigration reform or addressing our budget deficit, or be it within the realm of education, replacing No Child Left Behind or ESEA with an education law that makes sense for our country, or the Higher Education Act, at least we are able to come together around innovation and removing barriers that currently exist to innovations in higher education that promise to improve the quality and help certify the quality of what students learn, and at the same time reduce costs and allow students more options and choices with regard to how they can pursue an advanced degree or particular content knowledge that can help them achieve the job of their dreams.

While I am pleased that Secretary Duncan and the administration have allowed some programs to explore this model through the Experimental Sites Initiative, this bill is even more important today because we will not only expand to 20 sites the number of sites that will be allowed to experiment with regard to competency-based education, but just as importantly, we will provide a more enduring, bipartisan imprint on this important innovative policy.

We live in a very exciting time, Mr. Chairman, and technology promises to help us reinvent both kindergarten through 12th-grade education, as well as higher education, in ways that benefit American families. But we must adopt our legal framework to ensure that that happens.

Rather than continue to exclusively reward time that sits in seats with a professor up front lecturing, we need to make sure we are inclusive enough and allow innovation that allows students to proceed at their own pace, in their homes, so long as they can demonstrate they can master the knowledge that is the goal of the course.

Employers benefit, which is why the U.S. Chamber of Commerce supports this bill, by knowing that students have achieved content area knowledge of the course. Universities like Colorado State University in Fort Collins benefit because through the auxiliary institution they are able to offer even more varieties of courses to both their on-campus students as well as the surrounding community.

Most importantly, students and families benefit by having more choices and being able to afford a college education

at a time when it is increasingly important in the global economy.

Competency-based education can increase quality and decrease costs, when done right. In allowing innovation and experimentation, we will learn what doesn't work and we will learn what does work. There are good ways to do it, and there are ways that fall short. But to be able to get to that answer that to employers and universities and families and our country offers so much promise, we need to allow this innovation to occur and change the restrictive laws that currently lock the bulk of funding into the seat time requirements of the Carnegie units.

I want to thank Ranking Member MILLER, Chairman KLINE, Representative SALMON, and others for working to craft this bipartisan bill that will increase both access and innovation in higher education.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 3136 to support competency-based education and provide contemporary students with the ability to attain a degree that is based on their knowledge and skills instead of how long they are sitting in a seat.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Again, I want to thank the authors of this bill, with particular emphasis on Mr. SALMON, Mr. POLIS, and Mrs. BROOKS. A lot of people worked on this, though. My colleague, the ranking member of the full committee, Mr. MILLER, and I have talked about the advantages of moving forward with innovation and new ideas, because that is what is happening, Mr. Chairman.

Colleges and universities are changing—or trying to change—the model, the model which, as Mr. POLIS pointed out, is based on how much time you sit in a seat, not what you have learned and not what competency you have.

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It has been pointed out by a couple of speakers today that we are now dealing with a different student body than we have in the past. These are contemporary students. I guess that is our way of saying they are not the traditional students of the high school seniors who graduate and go off to 4 or 5 or 6 years of college. These are people, many times, who have come back, looking for a second career, a second chance, a new opportunity, and—yes, Mr. Chairman—looking for lower costs. This bill addresses all of that in order to give more students, more people, more families a chance—an opportunity—and a way to do it at a lower cost.

I know my friend and colleague Mr. POLIS has a couple of times mentioned his concerns about sleep for students. That may have something to do with a new baby in the family, but he makes a good point that these are families and that they have children and that they have jobs, and they need to be

able to demonstrate that they have the skills and the knowledge to go forward and get that degree or certificate.

I am very, very pleased with this bill. I will emphasize that it is not the complete reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. We need to continue to move to get that done, but it is an important first step, and I am pleased that this bill was the first step. It has strong bipartisan support and strong recognition in the administration, in Congress, and in colleges and universities that this is the direction we need to go.

As the ranking member pointed out, the demonstration projects part of this is important because, while we are thrilled with enthusiasm about the potential here, we need these projects to demonstrate what works well and what, perhaps, doesn't work as well as we had hoped.

So I am excited about this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support it. I would like to see a very big bipartisan vote for this because I know that is where the thought is, and I am enthusiastic about it.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chair, I rise to speak in support of H.R. 3136, the "Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act."

I thank Chairman SESSIONS and Ranking Member SLAUGHTER of the House Rules Committee for their management of the debate on the rule for H.R. 3136.

I thank Congressmen POLIS and SALMON for their bipartisan work to draft this bill that the House is considering.

Chairman KLINE and Congressman POLIS, thank you for managing the debate the debate on H.R. 3136.

I appreciate and thank the bipartisan effort led by Chairman KLINE, Ranking Member MILLER, Ranking Member FOXX, and the sponsors of H.R. 3136.

My appreciation to the Education Committee staff who worked with my staff on the Jackson Lee Amendment and for the Education Committee's support of the Jackson Lee Amendment to H.R. 3136.

As founder and co-chair of the Congressional Children's Caucus I am committed to seeing that every child and young person has the opportunity to grow up in a stable and safe home.

The first step for a safe and healthy childhood is the stability of the lives of adults in the lives of children.

I will speak more on the Jackson Lee Amendment when it is considered by the full House later today. The Jackson Lee Amendment would direct the Secretary of Education to conduct outreach to a number of underrepresented institutions regarding the federal education pilot grant program prior to the deadline for applications to be submitted for consideration for grant funds under the pilot program.

This bill does not do everything that I would hope that a higher education bill would do, but it is a step in the right direction. It would create more opportunities for Americans to have access to more high quality education; flexible higher education opportunities that can meet their education needs—which can open up a world of opportunities for older college stu-

dents or those who struggle to receive degrees while raising children and working full time jobs.

H.R. 3136, the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act will support federally funded pilot programs at secondary schools for Competency-Based Education programs that work to create certainty when a student progresses through a program that they are ready for the next step in their education.

We know that not everyone learns in the same way or at the same pace, but it is important that learning occurs. Adults have added pressures when they want to pursue education to compete for better paying jobs.

These programs may offer options that are not based on the traditional semester approach to classroom work, but on the steps that must be completed to move from one level of a training or education program to another.

Competence in any subject should be the foundation of education of students. If a student is returning to the classroom after years of work experience, this approach would best prepare them for being job ready upon graduation.

Competence-Based Education plans will aid students to master the lessons learned and enhance the student's educational experience, which will result in the maximum benefit to the student.

The challenge for the United States in the coming years is the STEM challenge—we have far more jobs in the fields of science, technology, engineering and mathematics available than people who are trained or educated to fill them.

The future of the economy is in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math careers.

The growth in STEM jobs is 3 times faster than job growth in non-STEM jobs.

Minority college students who major in STEM higher education make 25% more than minority graduates with non-STEM educations.

Minority students who take STEM jobs make 50% more than minority non-STEM graduates.

Women pursuing STEM higher education drop out of programs with higher grades than males who remain and graduate.

More than two-thirds of all STEM positions are filled by someone with a STEM degree.

Because of the current shortage of STEM workers for STEM positions and the projected need for STEM trained employees, the Federal government is in a race to attract and retain STEM employees.

According to Booze Hamilton's The Biggest Bang Theory, nearly a 25% of federal government employees are people who work STEM positions.

Stem workers earn 26% more than non-STEM graduates.

By 2018 we will need: 710,000 Computing workers, 160,000 Engineers, 70,000 Physical Scientists, 40,000 Life Science workers, and 20,000 Mathematics workers.

Mr. Chair, I ask that my colleagues vote in support of H.R. 3136.

The CHAIR. All time for general debate has expired.

Pursuant to the rule, the bill shall be considered for amendment under the 5-minute rule.

In lieu of the amendment in the nature of a substitute recommended by

the Committee on Education and the Workforce, printed in the bill, it shall be in order to consider as an original bill for the purpose of amendment under the 5-minute rule an amendment in the nature of a substitute consisting of the text of Rules Committee Print 113-52. That amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be considered as read.

The text of the amendment in the nature of a substitute is as follows:

H.R. 3136

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act of 2014”.

SEC. 2. COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.

(a) **PROJECTS.**—Part G of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1088 et seq.) is amended by inserting after section 486A the following:

“SEC. 486B. COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS.

“(a) **DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS AUTHORIZED.**—The Secretary shall select, in accordance with subsection (c), eligible entities to voluntarily carry out competency-based education demonstration projects and receive waivers described in subsection (d) to carry out such projects.

“(b) **APPLICATION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Each eligible entity desiring to carry out a demonstration project under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary, at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require.

“(2) **AMENDMENTS.**—An eligible entity may submit to the Secretary amendments to the eligible entity’s application under paragraph (1), at such time and in such manner as the Secretary may require, which the Secretary shall approve or deny within 15 days of receipt.

“(3) **CONTENTS.**—Each application shall include—

“(A) a description of the competency-based education to be offered by the eligible entity under the demonstration project;

“(B) a description of the proposed academic delivery, business, and financial models for the demonstration project, including explanations of how competency-based education offered under the demonstration project would—

“(i) result in the achievement of competencies;

“(ii) differ from standard credit hour approaches, in whole or in part; and

“(iii) result in lower costs or shortened time to degree, certificate, or credential completion;

“(C) a description of how the competency-based education offered under the demonstration project will progress a student toward completion of a degree, certificate, or credential;

“(D) a description of how the eligible entity will articulate the transcript from the competency-based education demonstration project to another program within an institution of higher education that is part of the eligible entity or to another institution of higher education;

“(E) a description of the statutory and regulatory requirements described in subsection (d) for which the eligible entity is seeking a waiver, and why such waiver is necessary to carry out the demonstration project;

“(F) a description of how the eligible entity will develop and evaluate the competencies and assessments of student knowledge (which may include prior-learning assessments) administered as part of the demonstration project, including how such competencies and assessments are aligned with workforce needs;

“(G) a description of the proposal for determining a student’s Federal student aid eligi-

bility under this title for participating in the demonstration project, the award and distribution of such aid, and safeguards to ensure that students are making satisfactory progress that warrants disbursement of such aid;

“(H) a description of the students to whom competency-based education will be offered, including an assurance that the demonstration project will enroll a minimum of 50 and a maximum of 3,000 students;

“(I) an assurance that students participating in the demonstration project will not be eligible for more Federal assistance under this title than such students would have been eligible for under a traditional program; and

“(J) an assurance the eligible entity will identify and disseminate best practices with respect to the demonstration project to other eligible entities carrying out a demonstration project under this section.

“(c) **SELECTION.**—

“(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall select not more than 20 eligible entities to carry out a competency-based education demonstration project under this section.

“(2) **CONSIDERATIONS.**—In selecting eligible entities under paragraph (1), the Secretary shall—

“(A) prioritize projects which show promise in reducing the time or cost required to complete a degree, certificate, or credential;

“(B) consider the number and quality of applications received;

“(C) consider an eligible entity’s—

“(i) ability to successfully execute the demonstration project as described in the eligible entity’s application under subsection (b);

“(ii) commitment and ability to effectively finance the demonstration project;

“(iii) ability to provide administrative capability and the expertise to evaluate student progress based on measures other than credit hours or clock hours; and

“(iv) commitment to work with the Secretary to evaluate the demonstration project and the impact of the demonstration project;

“(D) ensure the selection of a diverse group of eligible entities with respect to size, mission, and geographic distribution of the eligible entities;

“(E) not limit the types of programs of study or courses of study approved for participation in a demonstration project; and

“(F) not select an eligible entity that has had, for 1 of the preceding 2 fiscal years—

“(i) a cohort default rate (defined in section 435(m)) that is 30 percent or greater; and

“(ii) a borrowing rate of loans under this title of more than 50 percent of the students enrolled at institutions of higher education of the eligible entity.

“(d) **WAIVERS.**—The Secretary may waive for any eligible entity selected to carry out a demonstration project under this section any requirements of the following provisions of law (including any regulations promulgated under such provisions) or regulations and for which the eligible entity has provided a reason for waiving under subsection (b)(3)(E):

“(1) Subparagraphs (A) and (B) of section 102(a)(3).

“(2) Subsections (a) and (b) of section 481, as such subsections relate to requirements for a minimum number of weeks of instruction.

“(3) Section 484(l)(1).

“(4) Section 668.32(a)(1)(iii) of title 34, Code of Federal Regulations.

“(5) Any of the requirements under provisions in title I, part F of this title, or this part, that inhibit the operation of competency-based education, including requirements with respect to—

“(A) documenting attendance;

“(B) weekly academic activity;

“(C) minimum weeks of instructional time;

“(D) requirements for credit hour or clock hour equivalencies;

“(E) requirements for substantive interaction with faculty; and

“(F) definitions of the terms ‘academic year’, ‘full-time student’, ‘term’ (including ‘standard term’, ‘non-term’, and ‘non-standard term’), ‘satisfactory academic progress’, ‘educational activity’, ‘project of study’, and ‘payment period’.

“(e) **NOTIFICATION.**—Not later than 6 months after the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall make available to the authorizing committees and the public a list of eligible entities selected to carry out a demonstration project under this section, which shall include for each such eligible entity—

“(1) the specific statutory and regulatory requirements being waived under subsection (d); and

“(2) a description of the competency-based education programs of study or courses of study to be offered under the project.

“(f) **INFORMATION AND EVALUATION.**—

“(1) **INFORMATION.**—

“(A) **IN GENERAL.**—Each eligible entity that carries out a demonstration project under this section shall provide to the Director of the Institution of Education Sciences with respect to the students participating in the competency-based education project carried out by the eligible entity the following information:

“(i) The average number of credit hours the students earned prior to enrollment in the demonstration project, if applicable.

“(ii) The number and percentage of students participating in the demonstration project that are also enrolled in programs of study or courses of study offered in credit hours or clock hours, disaggregated by student status as a first-year, second-year, third-year, fourth-year, or other student.

“(iii) The average period of time between the enrollment of a student in the demonstration project and the first assessment of student knowledge of such student.

“(iv) The average time to 25 percent, 50 percent, 75 percent, and 100 percent of the completion of a degree, certificate, or credential by a student who participated in the demonstration project.

“(v) The percentage of assessments of student knowledge that students passed on the first attempt, during the period of the participation in the demonstration project by the students.

“(vi) The percentage of assessments of student knowledge that students passed on the second attempt and the average period of time between the first and second attempts by students, during the period of the participation in the demonstration project by the students.

“(vii) The average number of competencies a student acquired while participating in the demonstration project and the period of time during which the student acquired such competencies.

“(viii) Such other information as the Director may reasonably require.

“(B) **DISAGGREGATION.**—Each eligible entity shall provide the information required under subparagraph (A) disaggregated by age, race, gender, disability status, and status as a recipient of a Federal Pell Grant, provided that the disaggregation of the information does not identify any individual student participating in the demonstration project.

“(2) **EVALUATION.**—The Director of the Institution of Education Sciences, in consultation with the Secretary, shall annually evaluate each demonstration project under this section. Each evaluation shall include—

“(A) the extent to which the eligible entity has met the goals set forth in its application to the Secretary;

“(B) the number and types of students participating in the competency-based education offered under the project, including the progress of participating students toward completion of a degree, certificate, or credential, and the extent to which participation and retention in such project increased;

“(C) whether the project led to reduced cost or time to completion of a degree, certificate, or

credential, and the amount of cost or time reduced for such completion;

“(D) obstacles related to student financial assistance for competency-based education;

“(E) the extent to which statutory or regulatory requirements not waived under subsection (d) present difficulties for students or institutions of higher education;

“(F) degree, certificate, or credential completion rates;

“(G) retention rates;

“(H) total cost and net cost to the student of the competency-based education offered under the project;

“(I) a description of the assessments of student knowledge and the corresponding competencies; and

“(J) outcomes of the assessments of student knowledge.

“(3) ANNUAL REPORT.—The Director of the Institute of Education Sciences shall annually provide to the authorizing committees a report on—

“(A) the evaluations of the demonstration projects required under paragraph (2);

“(B) the number and types of students receiving assistance under this title for competency-based education under such projects;

“(C) the retention and completion rates of students participating in such projects;

“(D) any proposed statutory or regulatory changes designed to support and enhance the expansion of competency-based education, which may be independent of or combined with traditional credit hour or clock hour projects;

“(E) the most effective means of delivering competency-based education through demonstration projects; and

“(F) the appropriate level and distribution methodology of Federal assistance under this title for students enrolled in competency-based education.

“(g) OVERSIGHT.—In carrying out this section, the Secretary shall, on a continuing basis—

“(1) assure compliance of eligible entities with the requirements of this title (other than the provisions of law and regulations that are waived under subsection (d));

“(2) provide technical assistance;

“(3) monitor fluctuations in the student population enrolled in the eligible entities carrying out the demonstration projects under this section; and

“(4) consult with appropriate accrediting agencies or associations and appropriate State regulatory authorities for additional ways of improving the delivery of competency-based education.

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—For the purpose of this section:

“(1) COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION.—The term ‘competency-based education’ means an educational process or program that measures knowledge, skills, and experience through assessments of such knowledge, skills, or experience in place of or in addition to the use of credit hours or clock hours.

“(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term ‘eligible entity’ means—

“(A) an institution of higher education;

“(B) a system of institutions of higher education; or

“(C) a consortium of institutions of higher education.

“(3) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the meaning given the term in section 102, except that such term does not include institutions described in section 102(a)(1)(C).”.

(b) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this Act or the amendments made by this Act shall be construed to alter the authority of the Secretary of Education to establish experimental sites under any other provision of law.

(c) FUNDING.—

(1) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount authorized to be appropriated for salaries and expenses of the Department of Education,

\$1,000,000 shall be available to carry out this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

(2) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No funds are authorized to be appropriated by this Act to carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

The CHAIR. No amendment to the amendment in the nature of a substitute shall be in order except those printed in part A of House Report 113-546. Each such amendment shall be considered only in the order printed in the report, may be offered only by a Member designated in the report, shall be considered read, shall be debatable for the time specified in the report, equally divided and controlled by the proponent and an opponent, shall not be subject to amendment, and shall not be subject to a demand for division of the question.

AMENDMENT NO. 1 OFFERED BY MR. KLINE

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 1 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 6, insert “that has been selected to carry out a demonstration project under this section” after “eligible entity”.

Page 2, line 8, insert “approved” before “application”.

Page 8, line 15, strike “Institution” and insert “Institute”.

Page 13, line 12, strike “and” at the end. Page 13, line 16, strike the period at the end and insert “; and”.

Page 13, after line 16, insert the following: “(5) collect and disseminate to eligible entities carrying out a demonstration project under this section, best practices with respect to demonstration projects under this section.”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I offer this amendment in close cooperation with my colleague, the ranking member, Mr. MILLER.

This manager’s amendment clarifies that eligible entities that have been selected to carry out demonstration projects may submit amendments to their approved applications. It requires the Secretary of Education to collect and disseminate demonstration project best practices to eligible entities carrying out such projects, and it makes technical corrections.

Mr. Chairman, this is a very straightforward amendment, and we offer it together to improve this bill.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition to the amendment, but I do not oppose the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, this manager’s amendment would bolster the Department of Education’s ability to help identify and share best practices from experimentation at demonstration project sites.

Really, through this careful review and analysis, lawmakers can be sure that competency-based education is working and can identify any future policy issues that would need to come back to us or others at the State level.

I encourage my colleagues to vote “yes” on this amendment so we can move one step closer to making colleges more affordable and accessible.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. I thank my colleague for his comments.

Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. KLINE).

The amendment was agreed to.

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I ask unanimous consent to consider the Walberg amendment next, out of order, and then to return to the original order as a courtesy to a Member.

The CHAIR. A change in the order of the amendments would have to be accomplished in the House and not in the Committee of the Whole. The gentleman’s request cannot be entertained.

AMENDMENT NO. 2 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 2 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of the gentlewoman from Texas, I have an amendment at the desk, the Jackson Lee amendment.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, after line 5, insert the following:

“(2) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall, prior to any deadline to submit applications under paragraph (1), conduct outreach to historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Native American-serving, nontribal institutions, institutions serving students with special needs, and institutions located in rural areas to provide those institutions with information on the opportunity to apply to carry out a demonstration project under this section.

Page 2, line 6, strike “(2)” and insert “(3)”. Page 2, line 12, strike “(3)” and insert “(4)”.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I am proud to support this amendment that Ms. JACKSON LEE thoughtfully put together.

This amendment would ensure that the Department of Education is reaching out to colleges and systems that

educate minority, low-income, or students with special needs.

Some of those who stand to benefit the most under this innovation are first-generation college goers for whom cost is a major barrier to success. Minority-serving institutions are a critical thread in the fabric of America, and they should be included when experimenting with promising new education models.

Competency-based education programs are self-paced, helping ensure that students can work while they are in school, helping students who need a little more time to catch up or to learn concepts succeed and achieve at the highest levels.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I claim the time in opposition, although I don't intend to oppose it.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. KLINE. I see that the author has arrived.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment.

Mr. Chairman, I yield the remainder of my time to the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON LEE).

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentlewoman from Texas will control the balance of the time of the gentleman from Colorado.

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Chairman, may I determine what time is left, please.

The CHAIR. The gentlewoman from Texas has 4½ minutes remaining.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. First of all, let me thank the managers of this legislation, who have really brought together an important concept, and I just want to call the name of the bill: the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project.

Mr. Chairman, first of all, I am a big supporter of pilots because pilots provide information, and information generates a concrete program.

Mr. POLIS, thank you so very much for bringing up my amendment, and thank you both, the chairman and the ranking member, for supporting this amendment.

Let me be very keen on what it is both to Chairman KLINE and to Mr. POLIS. This is to take what you have and to add to it or, I might say, to make it better. The reason is that information is a gift. If you have information, you can do a lot of things.

Mr. Chairman, I work with a lot of Historically Black Colleges, so the Jackson Lee amendment would direct the Secretary of Education, prior to any deadlines for colleges or universities to submit applications for the consideration in the pilot program, to conduct outreach to Historically Black Colleges and Universities, Hispanic-

serving institutions, Native American-serving, nontribal institutions, institutions serving students with special needs, and institutions located in rural areas to provide information to them on the opportunity to apply to carry out a pilot demonstration project under this bill.

It is a whole gamut of individuals and colleges that this bill is directed to engage. Yes, there is general information, but I will tell you, when information is targeted, there are great successes that occur.

In my State alone, Texas ranks 43 out of 50 in State rankings with a 61.3 percent high school graduation rate. This statistic alone shows the need for dramatic improvements in our own system. However, there are great institutions that serve Native Americans, Hispanic-serving and African American, such as Texas Southern University and A&M. This outreach to them would provide these educators with working class residents the opportunity to get the right kind of information in order to develop competency-based education.

Texas Southern University has a technology program that trains young people for the new industries of today. They have a School of Public Affairs named after Barbara Jordan and Mickey Leland, our colleagues here in the United States Congress. They have a transportation department, which is very much geared toward the new opportunities for transportation. Then, of course, they are into science, as I indicated, as well as technology and math.

We have sent out these brilliant graduates, and this pilot program in helping their faculty and helping the university would be a great start. My amendment is to give them the knowledge to be part of the solution.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment is information to be part of the solving of the problems. I want more students to graduate from high school, and I want them to have opportunities broad based.

Let me close on this note.

Many people ask about the value of Historically Black Colleges, Hispanic-serving, Native American institutions. Do you know what, Mr. Chairman? There are enough students who are not in college today who will fill all of the universities. All of these universities have a rightful place, and the history of Historically Black Colleges in their traveling through the years of postslavery is a great opportunity to continue to serve. Now, with Native American-serving institutions and Hispanic-serving institutions, I am delighted that this amendment is put before this body.

I ask my colleagues to support the Jackson Lee amendment, which will create more opportunity and more outreach.

With that, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. Chair, I am pleased to offer the Jackson Lee Amendment that adds critical language to this bill.

I would like to thank Chairman KLINE and Congressman POLIS for their work in managing the debate on the rule for H.R. 3136.

I thank my colleague Congressman POLIS for his authorship of the bill and his leadership in working in a bipartisan way with the Education Committee to provide on this legislation that would address the education needs of non-tradition College and university students.

I appreciate and thank the bipartisan work the Education Committee staff who worked with my staff on the Jackson Lee Amendment, and for the Education Committee's support of the Jackson Lee Amendment.

The Jackson Lee amendment is simple, and would further the goals of the bill.

The Jackson Lee Amendment would direct the Secretary of Education prior to any deadlines for colleges or universities to submit applications for consideration in the pilot program to conduct outreach to historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, Native American-serving, non-tribal institutions, institutions serving students with special needs, and institutions located in rural areas to provide information to them on the opportunity to apply to carry out a pilot demonstration project under this bill.

Texas ranks 43rd out of the 50 in state rankings with a 61.3 percent high school graduation rate. This statistic alone shows the need for dramatic improvements to Texas' education system.

There will be adults who will benefit from the programs supported by this bill by creating education options that consider that some adults who may want to pursue a degree may need to first receive a GED.

The Texas Southern University located in my Congressional District will benefit from the outreach in making timely information available to the institution regarding the competency-based education demonstration projects Pilot program created by the bill.

TSU is uniquely situated in the heart of a community that has served the education needs of for decades.

Institutions like TSU provide great education to working class residents of Houston that is affordable, which means they often do not have Washington, DC based offices and may not receive notice of this opportunity unless efforts are made to conduct outreach to them.

Because of TSU's size it is within their scope and experience to develop a competency-based education pilot program that breaks the learning process down into stages that will attract students who may be unemployed, underemployed or considering a career change from the surrounding residential community where the TSU is located.

The institutions that may benefit from the inclusion of the Jackson Lee Amendment could reach students who are late in life—but still dream of earning a degree, but think that it is far out of reach.

Education programs that support training in a trade would be strengthened through this bill by ensuring that students are job ready upon completion of a certification or education program.

Mr. Chair, I ask that my colleagues support the Jackson Lee Amendment the H.R. 3136, the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The gentlewoman's amendment will help advance this goal by ensuring that a number of diverse institutions are aware of the opportunity to carry out an innovative, competency-based demonstration project.

I thank the gentlewoman for offering the amendment, and I urge my colleagues to support it and the underlying bill.

I yield back the balance of my time. The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

□ 1530

AMENDMENT NO. 3 OFFERED BY MR. WALBERG

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 3 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 2, line 6, strike "An eligible" and insert the following:

"(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible".

Page 2, after line 11, insert the following:

"(B) EXPANDING ENROLLMENT.—Notwithstanding the assurance required with respect to maximum enrollment under paragraph (3)(H)—

"(i) an eligible entity whose demonstration project has been evaluated under subsection (f)(2) not less than twice may submit to the Secretary an amendment to the eligible entity's application under paragraph (1) to increase enrollment in the project to more than 3,000 students, but not more than 5,000 students, and which shall specify—

"(I) the proposed maximum enrollment or annual enrollment growth for the project;

"(II) how the eligible entity will successfully carry out the project with such maximum enrollment or enrollment growth; and

"(III) any other amendments to the eligible entity's application under paragraph (1) that are related to such maximum enrollment or enrollment growth; and

"(ii) the Secretary shall determine whether to approve or deny an amendment submitted under clause (i) for a demonstration project based on the project's evaluations under subsection (f)(2)."

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. WALBERG. Mr. Chairman, with the dramatic rise in the cost of obtaining a college degree which we have witnessed over the last decade, it has become even more important to focus on ways to remove Federal roadblocks which prevent efforts to make higher education less costly.

H.R. 3136, the Advancing Competency-Based Education Demonstration Project Act, represents one of the innovative steps promoted by the House Education and the Workforce Committee to ensure we actually measure what students are learning, not just the time they have spent sitting in a class.

My amendment builds on this approach and will allow participating en-

titles in the demonstration projects to expand an approved project to a maximum of 5,000 students.

To ensure accountability and program quality, any entity wishing to expand a project must provide the Secretary a new proposed maximum number of students, a description of how the project will successfully carry out the expanded enrollment, and a description of any other amendments to the initial application related to the new enrollment number.

The small-scale expansion allowed by my amendment will help institutions develop techniques for increasing their competency-based education projects so more students can realize the benefits of a self-paced, lower-cost degree.

This approach will also help inform policymakers and the public of what projects are doing the best job at advancing this innovative education delivery model.

I want to thank Representative SALMON and Chairman KLINE for their leadership on this issue, and I urge my colleagues to support my amendment and the underlying bill.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, but I don't oppose the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, the Walberg amendment would allow institutions that have shown success with their demonstration projects to increase the number of students that can participate in their programs, helping to scale and allow more students to benefit.

By increasing the number of students in successful programs, we can better get a sense of how successful programs can be brought to scale.

Institutions should be rewarded with the ability to run a more robust demonstration project if their programs are reducing costs, improving quality, shortening time to degree. We should make sure that they are allowed to expand and remove any barriers to that.

Therefore, I am proud to join my colleague in support of the Walberg amendment. I encourage my colleagues to vote "yes" so that institutions will be able to run more robust and scalable demonstration projects.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. WALBERG).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 4 OFFERED BY MR. POLIS

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 4 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, as the designee of Mr. MCNERNEY, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 4, line 17, strike "and".

Page 4, line 22, strike the period and insert "; and".

Page 4, after line 22, insert the following

"(K) A description of the population of students served by the eligible entity that are veterans or members of the Armed Forces and how such eligible entity will, when appropriate, incorporate the specific needs of such population when carrying out the demonstration project.

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Colorado.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of the McNerney amendment. This amendment will require participating institutions to show how they are addressing the needs of veterans and members of the Armed Forces in their demonstration project.

Americans with military experience, both present or in their past, stand to benefit tremendously from competency-based education because they leave the military with a wide range of practicable, demonstrable, and marketable skills.

I have talked to so many veterans in my district who felt that they received excellent education within the military around a particular task, but get no credit for that with regard to the demonstrable skills that they have achieved. This amendment will help that occur.

Ensuring that institutions report more on how veterans and members of the Armed Forces are performing in demonstration projects will help highlight those who have served our country to the Department of Education so we can better identify best practices and expand best practices to those who have served.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, though I do not intend to oppose the amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Minnesota is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I am excited about this amendment. There has been much discussion about things that we can do to help our American heroes, to help those veterans who have served and/or are serving. Many of these veterans and servicemembers are seeking higher educational opportunities, and many of them, while they have limited time due to work and family, they have skills. They have education. They have competency. So this competency-based education is almost tailor-made for them.

I want to urge my colleagues to support this amendment and the underlying bill to help not only these American heroes, but students across the country.

Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I yield such time as he may consume to my colleague from California (Mr. MCNERNEY).

Mr. MCNERNEY. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank Chairman KLINE and Ranking Member MILLER, as well as the bill's author, Representative SALMON, for their joint efforts and leadership on this bipartisan piece of legislation, H.R. 3136.

Millions of American families share a common goal of sending their children to college. However, the cost of a college education continues to escalate, making it prohibitive for too many middle class families.

Promoting innovative ideas that provide institutions the flexibility will be essential in an evolving education system and learning environment. H.R. 3136 is a step in the right direction.

The bill seeks to change the ways that institutions have historically used credit hours to measure student progress and the awarding of financial aid, among other things.

The bill incorporates new innovative practices in higher education by allowing students to advance academically by demonstrating competence in a subject rather than by spending a set amount of time in a classroom.

While H.R. 3136 specifies a range of criteria that applications must fulfill to run a competency-based project, it is important that military and veteran populations are also taken into consideration.

That is why I am offering an amendment that requires an applicant, under this program, to provide information on the number of veterans and military students it has, and to include how it incorporates those particular student needs into its demonstration project.

Servicemembers and veterans often require flexibility in the pursuit of their education goals. We owe it to these brave young men and women, upon their returning from service, to help them pursue higher education as seamlessly as possible.

I believe that my amendment will help keep track of these progresses that a veteran and the military student populations are making in any new competency-based program, and to hold these programs accountable for the progress of veterans.

Mr. Chairman, I urge the adoption of this amendment.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, we have no additional speakers on this side. I reserve the right to close.

PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

Mr. KLINE. Parliamentary inquiry, Mr. Chairman.

The CHAIR. The gentleman will state his parliamentary inquiry.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I am a little confused about who has the right to close.

The CHAIR. Where there is no qualifying opponent, the gentleman from

Colorado has the right to close on his amendment.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I urge support of this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I join my colleague, the chair of the committee, and others in encouraging my colleagues to support the McNerney and Polis amendment, so that veterans and members of the Armed Forces today can be better served by these demonstration projects and stand to benefit from the education they receive within the military itself.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. POLIS).

The amendment was agreed to.

AMENDMENT NO. 5 OFFERED BY MR. BYRNE

The CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 5 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 5, line 1, strike "20" and insert "30".

The CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Alabama.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, this is a simple, technical amendment that seeks to increase the maximum number of eligible entities authorized to participate in the competency-based demonstration project established by H.R. 3136 from 20 to 30.

As a former member of the Alabama State Board of Education and chancellor of Alabama's 2-year college system, I commend my colleague and fellow member of the Education and the Workforce Committee, Mr. SALMON of Arizona, for introducing this innovative legislation.

In today's world, we cannot continue to regard higher education as a one-size-fits-all process. As our economy continues to recover, higher education institutions continue to see a large influx of students who are seeking to further their education after years in the workforce.

At the same time, our K-12 school systems are becoming more innovative, incorporating cutting-edge technologies and allowing for dual-enrollment and workforce training opportunities prior to graduation.

For these reasons, many students are arriving at higher education institutions with a variety of different skills in place but must still complete a prerequisite amount of courses before earning a degree, regardless of their competency in certain areas of study.

Unfortunately, the cost of higher education continues to rise, as does student loan debt. The competency-

based demonstration project authorized by H.R. 3136 will allow students to gear their financial aid towards actual learning opportunities, versus simply checking off courses that may not be applicable to their needs, and logging seat time.

My basic amendment would simply allow for a more full-bodied and diverse sample of participating institutions to ensure that this demonstration project creates a truly representative sample of higher education opportunities.

This increase should improve the ability to analyze how such an approach could affect flexibility for institutions, while providing a more personalized, cost-effective education for a variety of different students.

Mr. Chairman, I urge my colleagues to support this commonsense amendment, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, I claim time in opposition to the amendment, but I do not oppose this amendment.

The CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman from Colorado is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. POLIS. Mr. Chairman, Mr. BYRNE's amendment would increase the number of institutions or consortiums allowed to participate in the demonstration project. Including more high-quality institutions in the demonstration project will yield more information and more innovation on the benefits and risks of competency-based education.

Including more institutions will accelerate the amount of experimentation and, therefore, the amount of learning that we as policymakers have, and also help increase the likelihood of identifying successful best practices to reduce college costs more quickly.

I strongly urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this amendment so that more institutions can experiment with innovative, new, cost-effective education models.

Mr. Chairman, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BYRNE. Mr. Chairman, I appreciate the gentleman's comments. At this time, with America, we have so many opportunities before us, but we have to make sure that the people in our society, and the people that are coming through some difficult circumstances, have opportunities that didn't exist before.

These sorts of innovations provide opportunities for them and for institutions of higher education to figure out where we need to go in the future so that we deliver the product of higher education in the way it needs to be delivered and received by those that can benefit the most.

□ 1545

So I appreciate the gentleman's comments. I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The CHAIR. The question is on the amendment offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE).

The amendment was agreed to.

Mr. KLINE. Mr. Chairman, I move that the Committee do now rise.

The motion was agreed to.

Accordingly, the Committee rose; and the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania) having assumed the chair, Mr. AMODEI, Chair of the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union, reported that that Committee, having had under consideration the bill (H.R. 3136) to establish a demonstration program for competency-based education, had come to no resolution thereon.

PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H. CON. RES. 105, REMOVING UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES FROM IRAQ

Mr. NUGENT. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that it be in order at any time to consider House Concurrent Resolution 105 in the House, if called up by the Chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs or his designee;

that the amendment printed in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD designated for that purpose in clause 8 of rule XVIII and numbered 1 be considered as adopted;

that the concurrent resolution, as amended, be considered as read;

and that the previous question be considered as ordered on the concurrent resolution, as amended, to adoption without intervening motion or demand for division of the question except for 1 hour of debate equally divided and controlled by Representative ROYCE of California and Representative MCGOVERN of Massachusetts or their respective designees.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Florida?

There was no objection.

ADVANCING COMPETENCY-BASED EDUCATION DEMONSTRATION PROJECT ACT OF 2013

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 677 and rule XVIII, the Chair declares the House in the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill, H.R. 3136.

Will the gentleman from Georgia (Mr. WESTMORELAND) kindly take the chair.

□ 1547

IN THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE

Accordingly, the House resolved itself into the Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union for the further consideration of the bill (H.R. 3136) to establish a demonstration program for competency-based education, with Mr. WESTMORELAND (Acting Chair) in the chair.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The Acting CHAIR. When the Committee of the Whole House rose earlier today, amendment No. 5 printed in part

A of House Report 113-546 offered by the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. BYRNE) had been disposed of.

AMENDMENT NO. 6 OFFERED BY MR. LANGEVIN

The Acting CHAIR. It is now in order to consider amendment No. 6 printed in part A of House Report 113-546.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I have an amendment at the desk.

The Acting CHAIR. The Clerk will designate the amendment.

The text of the amendment is as follows:

Page 10, after line 9 insert the following:

“(B) EMPLOYMENT DATA.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible entity that carries out a demonstration project under this section may provide to the Director of the Institute of Education Sciences with respect to the students participating in the competency-based education project carried out by the eligible entity the number and percentage of students completing a competency-based education program or course of study offered by such eligible entity who find employment in a field related to the program or course of study of such students.

“(ii) TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE.—The Director of the Institute of Education Sciences shall, at the request of an eligible entity, provide technical assistance to such eligible entity to assist such eligible entity in collecting and reporting accurate information relating to the employment of students participating in a competency-based education project carried out by such eligible entity.

Page 10, line 10, strike “(B)” and insert “(C)”.

The Acting CHAIR. Pursuant to House Resolution 677, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN) and a Member opposed each will control 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Rhode Island.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Chairman, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to, first of all, thank the gentleman from Arizona, Congressman SALMON, as well as Chairman KLINE and Ranking Member MILLER for their work in bringing this very important bill to the floor.

Mr. Chairman, my amendment would allow entities receiving funds under this bill to report the number and percentage of students who are able to find employment in a field relating to their program or course of study and would allow the director of IES to provide technical assistance to such entities upon request.

Basically, my intent is to give situational awareness to both educators and students and also an understanding of how well our dollars being spent in terms of educating both our young people and people who are looking for a second career, looking for other job opportunities, so that they know that their time and effort will be well spent.

I am proud to be joined in offering this amendment by my good friend and colleague, Congressman G.T. THOMPSON from Pennsylvania, as coauthors of the bipartisan Career and Technical Education Caucus.

Representative THOMPSON and I are committed to providing all students

with the information necessary to make informed career decisions.

Many of the students who will be served by this bill are nontraditional students, working parents, students with full-time jobs, and many others who are seeking a different education than what a traditional 4-year curriculum affords, so these are the very people who would benefit the most from clear and accessible career market information.

It has become obvious that high school diplomas are really no longer sufficient training for the modern job market, and while not every job will require a college degree, some sort of postsecondary education will be necessary, and students, Mr. Chairman, deserve accurate information to help them find the career pathway that best fits their goals and abilities.

My amendment will help these students by encouraging schools to report on the number of students who are able to use their education to find a relevant career, data that students will be able to use in the coming years to inform their own decisions and choose an academic path that will lead to a well-paying job.

This amendment has been scored by the CBO as budget-neutral and will not result in any additional spending.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, I rise to claim the time in opposition, although I am not opposed to this amendment.

The Acting CHAIR. Without objection, the gentleman is recognized for 5 minutes.

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Chairman, while claiming the time in opposition, I rise as a supporter and cosponsor of this bipartisan amendment with my colleague and fellow co-chairman of the House Career and Technical Education Caucus, Congressman LANGEVIN.

Our amendment would allow eligible entities to submit to the Institute of Education Sciences information regarding the number and percentage of students who are able to find employment, jobs in a field relating to their program or course of study.

This will provide for the collection of longitudinal data and will allow policymakers to have a further understanding of course study and career alignment, but more importantly, students will be able to utilize these findings to see what courses of study have a higher prevalence of job placement.

Mr. Chairman, I often say, “It is not where you start out in life, but it is where you end up,” and education is the key to that journey.

This amendment will further assist students participating in competency-based programs, many of whom will be nontraditional students and will provide them with another opportunity to attain success in life.

I urge my colleagues to support this bipartisan, no-cost amendment and reserve the balance of my time.