

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1949

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.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 2013

Mr. MESSER (for himself, Mr. KLINE, Mr. PETRI, Ms. FOXX, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania, and Mr. BUCSHON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

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,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

1 **SEC. 2. STUDY ON WAYS TO IMPROVE POSTSECONDARY**
2 **EDUCATION TRANSPARENCY AT THE FED-**
3 **ERAL LEVEL.**

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

6 (1) **IN GENERAL.—**Not later than 30 days after
7 the date of enactment of this Act, the Secretary of
8 Education shall convene the Advisory Committee on
9 Improving Postsecondary Education Data (in this
10 Act referred to as the “Advisory Committee”), which
11 shall be comprised of 15 members appointed by the
12 Secretary in consultation with the Commissioner for
13 Education Statistics, including—

14 (A) individuals representing different sec-
15 tors of institutions of higher education;

16 (B) experts in the field of higher education
17 policy;

18 (C) State higher education officials, stu-
19 dents, and other stakeholders from the higher
20 education community;

21 (D) representatives from the business com-
22 munity;

23 (E) experts in choice in consumer markets,
24 and

25 (F) privacy experts.

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

3 (b) STUDY REQUIRED.—The Advisory Committee
4 shall conduct a study examining—

5 (1) the types of information, including informa-
6 tion related to costs of postsecondary education, stu-
7 dent outcomes, and postgraduation earnings, the
8 Federal Government should collect and report on in-
9 stitutions of higher education to assist students and
10 families in their search for an institution of higher
11 education;

12 (2) how such information should be collected
13 and reported, including how to disaggregate infor-
14 mation on student outcomes by subgroups of stu-
15 dents, such as full-time students, part-time students,
16 nontraditional students, students who are veterans,
17 and Federal Pell Grant recipients under subpart 1
18 of part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act
19 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a); and

20 (3) the ways in which the Federal Government
21 may make such information more readily available
22 to—

23 (A) students and their families in a format
24 that is easily accessible and understandable;
25 and

1 (B) States, individual or groups of institu-
2 tions of higher education, and private-sector en-
3 tities.

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

7 (1) whether the current Federal transparency
8 initiatives on postsecondary education—

9 (A) are reporting consistent information
10 about individual institutions of higher education
11 across Federal agencies; and

12 (B) are similar to transparency initiatives
13 on postsecondary education carried out by
14 States, individual or groups of institutions of
15 higher education, or private-sector entities;

16 (2) whether—

17 (A) the collection and reporting of
18 postgraduation earnings by the Federal Govern-
19 ment is feasible, and if feasible, the options for
20 collecting and reporting such information;

21 (B) collecting and reporting such informa-
22 tion would improve the utility of Federal trans-
23 parency initiatives for students and their fami-
24 lies; and

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

4 (3) whether any other information, including in-
5 formation relating to student outcomes or identified
6 under the review required under subsection (d),
7 should be collected and reported by the Federal Gov-
8 ernment to improve the utility of such initiatives for
9 students and their families, and if so, how such in-
10 formation may be collected and reported, including
11 whether the information should be disaggregated by
12 subgroups of students;

13 (4) whether any information currently collected
14 and reported by the Federal Government on institu-
15 tions of higher education is not useful for students
16 and their families and should not be so collected and
17 reported;

18 (5) the manner in which the information from
19 Federal transparency initiatives is made available to
20 students and their families, and whether format
21 changes may help the information become more eas-
22 ily understood and widely utilized by students and
23 their families;

24 (6) any activities being carried out by the Fed-
25 eral Government, States, individual or groups of in-

1 institutions of higher education, or private-sector enti-
2 ties to help inform students and their families of the
3 availability of Federal transparency initiatives;

4 (7) the cost to institutions of higher education
5 of reporting to the Federal Government the informa-
6 tion that is being collected and reported through
7 Federal transparency initiatives, and how such cost
8 may be minimized; and

9 (8) the relevant research described in sub-
10 section (d).

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

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

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

20 (3) whether the availability to students and
21 their families of additional information on institu-
22 tions of higher education will be beneficial or con-
23 fusing;

24 (4) results, if any, that are available from con-
25 sumer testing of Federal, State, institution of higher

1 education, and private-sector transparency initiatives
2 on postsecondary education that have been made
3 publicly available on or after the date that is 10
4 years before the date of enactment of this Act; and

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

9 (e) CONSULTATION.—

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

12 (A) hold public hearings to consult with
13 parents and students; and

14 (B) consult with a broad range of inter-
15 ested parties in higher education, including ap-
16 propriate researchers, representatives of sec-
17 ondary schools and institutions of higher edu-
18 cation, State administrators, and Federal offi-
19 cials.

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

24 (f) REPORTS TO AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—

1 (1) INTERIM REPORT.—Not later than 180
2 days after the date of enactment of this Act, the Ad-
3 visory Committee shall prepare and submit to the
4 authorizing committees and the Secretary an interim
5 report describing the progress made in conducting
6 the study under this Act and any preliminary find-
7 ings on the topics identified under subsection (c).

8 (2) FINAL REPORT.—

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

14 (i) recommendations for legislative,
15 regulatory, and administrative actions
16 based on findings related to the topics
17 identified under subsection (c); and

18 (ii) a summary of the research de-
19 scribed in subsection (d).

20 (B) CONSULTATION WITH NCES.—The
21 Advisory Committee shall consult with the Com-
22 missioner of Education Statistics prior to mak-
23 ing recommendations under subparagraph
24 (A)(i) with respect to improving the information

1 being collected and reported by the Federal
2 Government on institutions of higher education.

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

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

8 (1) AUTHORIZING COMMITTEES.—The term
9 “authorizing committees” has the meaning given the
10 term in section 103 of the Higher Education Act of
11 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1003).

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

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

20 (4) 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 (5) 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.

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