



FACT SHEET

EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

FLEXIBLE PELL GRANT FOR 21ST CENTURY STUDENTS ACT

THE PROBLEM:

Student demographics have changed dramatically in recent decades. Whereas the majority of students used to enroll in a four-year, full-time program fresh out of high school, an increasing number of students – “contemporary students” – are older, have a family, and work full- or part-time jobs. These students are looking to quickly and affordably earn a degree that will help them compete and succeed in the workforce.

Unfortunately, outdated higher education programs do not meet the needs of contemporary students. For example, while the Pell Grant provides support for more than one-third of all undergraduate students, the program fails to adequately support those who want to complete their studies more quickly by taking additional courses beyond the traditional academic year. Instead, students who receive Pell Grants are bound to a rigid system based on a six-year, two-semester timeline – discouraging many students from pursuing higher education altogether.

THE SOLUTION:

To modernize the Pell Grant program for all students, Reps. Elise Stefanik (R-NY) and Carlos Curbelo (R-FL), and Higher Education and Workforce Training Subcommittee Ranking Member Rubén Hinojosa (D-TX) introduced the *Flexible Pell Grant for 21st Century Students Act*. The bipartisan legislation will help students complete a postsecondary education more quickly and at a lower cost.

H.R. 3180 – FLEXIBLE PELL GRANT FOR 21ST CENTURY STUDENTS ACT:

- Provides students the flexibility to draw Pell Grant funds at an accelerated pace in order to pay for additional courses within an award year.
- Encourages students to complete degrees more quickly, leading to less debt and faster entry into the workforce.
- Maintains maximum lifetime Pell Grant award eligible students can receive over the course of their education.
- Assists students in making informed decisions about their academic progress by directing the Secretary of Education to provide an individualized federal financial aid status reports to each student annually.