

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3178

To simplify and streamline the information regarding institutions of higher education made publicly available by the Secretary of Education, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2015

Ms. FOXX (for herself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. KLINE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. STEFANIK, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. DESAULNIER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To simplify and streamline the information regarding institutions of higher education made publicly available by the Secretary of Education, and for other purposes.

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

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Strengthening Trans-
5 parency in Higher Education Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 132 of the Higher
8 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a)—

2 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-
3 time,”;

4 (B) in paragraph (3) in the matter pre-
5 ceeding subparagraph (A), by striking “first-
6 time,”; and

7 (C) in paragraph (4), by striking “first-
8 time,”;

9 (2) in subsection (b)—

10 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “first-
11 time”; and

12 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-
13 time”;

14 (3) by striking subsections (e) through (g), (j),
15 and (l);

16 (4) by redesignating subsections (h), (i), and
17 (k) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

18 (5) by striking subsection (d) (as so redesign-
19 ated) and inserting the following new subsection:

20 “(d) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

21 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION
22 INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall develop and
23 make publicly available a website to be known as the
24 ‘College Dashboard website’ in accordance with this
25 section and prominently display on such website, in

1 simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the
2 most recent academic year for which satisfactory
3 data are available, the following information with re-
4 spect to each institution of higher education that
5 participates in a program under title IV:

6 “(A) A link to the website of the institu-
7 tion.

8 “(B) An identification of the type of insti-
9 tution as one of the following:

10 “(i) A four-year public institution of
11 higher education.

12 “(ii) A four-year private, nonprofit in-
13 stitution of higher education.

14 “(iii) A four-year private, for-profit
15 institution of higher education.

16 “(iv) A two-year public institution of
17 higher education.

18 “(v) A two-year private, nonprofit in-
19 stitution of higher education.

20 “(vi) A two-year private, for-profit in-
21 stitution of higher education.

22 “(vii) A less than two-year public in-
23 stitution of higher education.

24 “(viii) A less than two-year private,
25 nonprofit institution of higher education.

1 “(ix) A less than two-year private,
2 for-profit institution of higher education.

3 “(C) The number of students enrolled at
4 the institution—

5 “(i) as undergraduate students; and

6 “(ii) as graduate students, if applica-
7 ble.

8 “(D) The student-faculty ratio.

9 “(E) The percentage of degree-seeking or
10 certificate-seeking undergraduate students en-
11 rolled at the institution who obtain a degree or
12 certificate within—

13 “(i) 100 percent of the normal time
14 for completion of, or graduation from, the
15 program in which the student is enrolled;

16 “(ii) 150 percent of the normal time
17 for completion of, or graduation from, the
18 program in which the student is enrolled;
19 and

20 “(iii) 200 percent of the normal time
21 for completion of, or graduation from, the
22 program in which the student is enrolled.

23 “(F) The average net price per year for
24 undergraduate students receiving Federal stu-
25 dent financial aid under title IV based on an in-

1 come category selected by the user from a list
2 containing the following income categories:

3 “(i) \$0 to \$30,000.

4 “(ii) \$30,001 to \$48,000.

5 “(iii) \$48,001 to \$75,000.

6 “(iv) \$75,001 to \$110,000.

7 “(v) \$110,001 to \$150,000.

8 “(vi) Over \$150,000.

9 “(G) A link to the net price calculator for
10 such institution.

11 “(H) The percentage of undergraduate
12 students who obtained a certificate or degree
13 from the institution who borrowed Federal stu-
14 dent loans and the average Federal student
15 loan debt incurred by an undergraduate student
16 who obtained a certificate or degree from the
17 institution and borrowed Federal student loans
18 in the course of obtaining such certificate or de-
19 gree.

20 “(I) A link to national and regional data
21 from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on starting
22 salaries in all major occupations.

23 “(J) A link to the webpage of the institu-
24 tion containing campus safety data with respect
25 to such institution.

1 “(2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The Sec-
2 retary shall publish on Internet webpages that are
3 linked to through the College Dashboard website for
4 the most recent academic year for which satisfactory
5 data is available the following information with re-
6 spect to each institution of higher education that
7 participates in a program under title IV:

8 “(A) ENROLLMENT.—

9 “(i) The percentages of male and fe-
10 male undergraduate students enrolled at
11 the institution.

12 “(ii) The percentages of under-
13 graduate students enrolled at the institu-
14 tion—

15 “(I) full-time; and

16 “(II) less than full-time.

17 “(iii) In the case of an institution
18 other than an institution that provides all
19 courses and programs through distance
20 education, of the undergraduate students
21 enrolled at the institution—

22 “(I) the percentage of such stu-
23 dents who are from the State in which
24 the institution is located;

1 “(II) the percentage of such stu-
2 dents who are from other States; and

3 “(III) the percentage of such stu-
4 dents who are international students.

5 “(iv) The percentages of under-
6 graduate students enrolled at the institu-
7 tion, disaggregated by—

8 “(I) race and ethnic background;

9 “(II) classification as a student
10 with a disability;

11 “(III) recipients of a Federal Pell
12 Grant;

13 “(IV) recipients of assistance
14 under a tuition assistance program
15 conducted by the Department of De-
16 fense under section 1784a or 2007 of
17 title 10, United States Code, or other
18 authorities available to the Depart-
19 ment of Defense or veterans’ edu-
20 cation benefits (as defined in section
21 480); and

22 “(V) recipients of a Federal stu-
23 dent loan.

1 “(B) COMPLETION.—The information re-
2 quired under paragraph (1)(E), disaggregated
3 by—

4 “(i) recipients of a Federal Pell
5 Grant;

6 “(ii) recipients of a loan made under
7 part D (other than a Federal Direct Un-
8 subsidized Stafford Loan) who did not re-
9 ceive a Federal Pell Grant;

10 “(iii) persons who did not receive a
11 Federal Pell Grant or a loan made under
12 part D (other than a Federal Direct Un-
13 subsidized Stafford Loan);

14 “(iv) race and ethnic background;

15 “(v) classification as a student with a
16 disability; and

17 “(vi) recipients of assistance under a
18 tuition assistance program conducted by
19 the Department of Defense under section
20 1784a or 2007 of title 10, United States
21 Code, or other authorities available to the
22 Department of Defense or veterans’ edu-
23 cation benefits (as defined in section 480).

24 “(C) COSTS.—

1 “(i) The cost of attendance for full-
2 time undergraduate students enrolled in
3 the institution who live on campus.

4 “(ii) The cost of attendance for full-
5 time undergraduate students enrolled in
6 the institution who live off campus.

7 “(iii) The cost of tuition and fees for
8 full-time undergraduate students enrolled
9 in the institution.

10 “(iv) The cost of tuition and fees per
11 credit hour or credit hour equivalency for
12 undergraduate students enrolled in the in-
13 stitution less than full time.

14 “(v) In the case of a public institution
15 of higher education (other than an institu-
16 tion described in clause (vi)) and notwith-
17 standing subsection (b)(1), the costs de-
18 scribed in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

19 “(I) full-time students enrolled in
20 the institution who are residents of
21 the State in which the institution is
22 located; and

23 “(II) full-time students enrolled
24 in the institution who are not resi-
25 dents of such State.

1 “(vi) In the case of a public institu-
2 tion of higher education that offers dif-
3 ferent tuition rates for students who are
4 residents of a geographic subdivision small-
5 er than a State and students not located in
6 such geographic subdivision and notwith-
7 standing subsection (b)(1), the costs de-
8 scribed in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

9 “(I) full-time students enrolled at
10 the institution who are residents of
11 such geographic subdivision;

12 “(II) full-time students enrolled
13 at the institution who are residents of
14 the State in which the institution is
15 located but not residents of such geo-
16 graphic subdivision; and

17 “(III) full-time students enrolled
18 at the institution who are not resi-
19 dents of such State.

20 “(D) FINANCIAL AID.—

21 “(i) The average annual grant amount
22 (including Federal, State, and institutional
23 aid) awarded to an undergraduate student
24 enrolled at the institution who receives fi-
25 nancial aid.

1 “(ii) The percentage of undergraduate
2 students enrolled at the institution receiv-
3 ing Federal, State, and institutional
4 grants, student loans, and any other type
5 of student financial assistance known by
6 the institution, provided publicly or
7 through the institution, such as Federal
8 work-study funds.

9 “(iii) The cohort default rate (as de-
10 fined in section 435(m)) for such institu-
11 tion.

12 “(E) FACULTY INFORMATION.—

13 “(i) The ratio of the number of course
14 sections taught by part-time instructors to
15 the number of course sections taught by
16 full-time faculty, disaggregated by course
17 sections intended primarily for under-
18 graduate students and course sections in-
19 tended primarily for graduate students.

20 “(ii) The mean and median years of
21 employment for part-time instructors.

22 “(3) OTHER DATA MATTERS.—

23 “(A) COMPLETION DATA.—The Commis-
24 sioner of Education Statistics shall ensure that
25 the information required under paragraph

1 (1)(E) includes information with respect to all
2 students at an institution, including students
3 other than first-time, full-time students and
4 students who transfer to another institution, in
5 a manner that the Commissioner considers ap-
6 propriate.

7 “(B) ADJUSTMENT OF INCOME CAT-
8 EGORIES.—The Secretary may annually adjust
9 the range of each of the income categories de-
10 scribed in paragraph (1)(F) to account for a
11 change in the Consumer Price Index for All
12 Urban Consumers as determined by the Bureau
13 of Labor Statistics if the Secretary determines
14 an adjustment is necessary.

15 “(4) INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISON.—The Sec-
16 retary shall include on the College Dashboard
17 website a method for users to easily compare the in-
18 formation required under paragraphs (1) and (2) be-
19 tween institutions.

20 “(5) UPDATES.—

21 “(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update
22 the College Dashboard website not less than an-
23 nually.

24 “(B) TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.—The
25 Secretary shall regularly assess the format and

1 technology of the College Dashboard website
2 and make any changes or updates that the Sec-
3 retary considers appropriate.

4 “(6) CONSUMER TESTING.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In developing and
6 maintaining the College Dashboard website, the
7 Secretary, in consultation with appropriate de-
8 partments and agencies of the Federal Govern-
9 ment, shall conduct consumer testing with ap-
10 propriate persons, including current and pro-
11 spective college students, family members of
12 such students, institutions of higher education,
13 and experts, to ensure that the College Dash-
14 board website is usable and easily understand-
15 able and provides useful and relevant informa-
16 tion to students and families.

17 “(B) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
18 CHANGES.—The Secretary shall submit to the
19 authorizing committees any recommendations
20 that the Secretary considers appropriate for
21 changing the information required to be pro-
22 vided on the College Dashboard website under
23 paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the results of
24 the consumer testing conducted under subpara-
25 graph (A).

1 “(7) PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE LINKS TO
2 PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AFTER SUBMISSION OF
3 FAFSA.—The Secretary shall provide to each student
4 that submits a Free Application for Federal Student
5 Aid described in section 483 a link to the webpage
6 of the College Dashboard website that contains the
7 information required under paragraph (1) for each
8 institution of higher education such student includes
9 on such Application.

10 “(8) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Sec-
11 retary, in consultation with each appropriate head of
12 a department or agency of the Federal Government,
13 shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable that
14 any information related to higher education that is
15 published by such department or agency is con-
16 sistent with the information published on the College
17 Dashboard website.

18 “(9) REFERENCES TO COLLEGE NAVIGATOR
19 WEBSITE.—Any reference in this Act to the College
20 Navigator website shall be considered a reference to
21 the College Dashboard website.”.

22 (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Higher Edu-
23 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), as amended
24 by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended—

1 (1) in section 131(h) (20 U.S.C. 1015(h)), by
2 striking “College Navigator” and inserting “College
3 Dashboard”; and

4 (2) in section 132(a) (20 U.S.C. 1015a(a)), by
5 striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following
6 new paragraph:

7 “(1) COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.—The
8 term ‘College Dashboard website’ means the College
9 Dashboard website required under subsection (d).”.

10 (c) DEVELOPMENT.—The Secretary of Education
11 shall develop and publish the College Dashboard website
12 required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act
13 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as amended by subsections
14 (a) and (b) of this section, not later than one year after
15 the date of the enactment of this Act.

16 (d) COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary shall maintain the College Navi-
17 gator website required under section 132 of the Higher
18 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as in effect
19 the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, in
20 the manner required under the Higher Education Act of
21 1965, as in effect on such day, until the College Dash-
22 board website referred to in subsection (c) is complete and
23 publicly available on the Internet.
24

1 **SEC. 3. NET PRICE CALCULATORS.**

2 Subsection (c) of section 132 of the Higher Edu-
3 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as redesignated
4 by section 2(a)(4) of this Act, is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as para-
6 graph (6); and

7 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
8 lowing new paragraphs:

9 “(4) **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NET PRICE**
10 **CALCULATORS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date
11 of the enactment of the Strengthening Transparency
12 in Higher Education Act, a net price calculator for
13 an institution of higher education shall meet the fol-
14 lowing requirements:

15 “(A) The link for the calculator shall—

16 “(i) be clearly labeled as a net price
17 calculator and prominently, clearly, and
18 conspicuously posted in locations on the
19 website of such institution where informa-
20 tion on costs and aid is provided and any
21 other location that the institution considers
22 appropriate; and

23 “(ii) match in size and font to the
24 other prominent links on the webpage
25 where the link for the calculator is dis-
26 played.

1 “(B) The webpage displaying the results
2 for the calculator shall specify at least the fol-
3 lowing information:

4 “(i) The net price (as calculated
5 under subsection (a)(2)) for such institu-
6 tion, which shall be the most visually
7 prominent figure on the results screen.

8 “(ii) Cost of attendance, including—

9 “(I) tuition and fees;

10 “(II) average annual cost of
11 room and board for the institution for
12 a full-time undergraduate student en-
13 rolled in the institution;

14 “(III) average annual cost of
15 books and supplies for a full-time un-
16 dergraduate student enrolled in the
17 institution; and

18 “(IV) estimated cost of other ex-
19 penses (including personal expenses
20 and transportation) for a full-time un-
21 dergraduate student enrolled in the
22 institution.

23 “(iii) Estimated total need-based
24 grant aid and merit-based grant aid from
25 Federal, State, and institutional sources

1 that may be available to a full-time under-
2 graduate student.

3 “(iv) Percentage of the full-time un-
4 dergraduate students enrolled in the insti-
5 tution that received any type of grant aid
6 described in clause (iii).

7 “(v) The disclaimer described in para-
8 graph (6).

9 “(vi) In the case of a calculator
10 that—

11 “(I) includes questions to esti-
12 mate the eligibility of a student or
13 prospective student for veterans’ edu-
14 cation benefits (as defined in section
15 480) or educational benefits for active
16 duty service members, such benefits
17 are displayed on the results screen in
18 a manner that clearly distinguishes
19 such benefits from the grant aid de-
20 scribed in clause (iii); or

21 “(II) does not include questions
22 to estimate eligibility for the benefits
23 described in subclause (I), the results
24 screen indicates that certain students
25 (or prospective students) may qualify

1 for such benefits and includes a link
2 to information about such benefits.

3 “(C) The institution shall populate the cal-
4 culator with data from an academic year that
5 is not more than 2 academic years prior to the
6 most recent academic year.

7 “(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF DATA COL-
8 LECTED BY THE NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—A net
9 price calculator for an institution of higher edu-
10 cation shall—

11 “(A) clearly indicate which questions are
12 required to be completed for an estimate of the
13 net price from the calculator;

14 “(B) in the case of a calculator that re-
15 quests contact information from users, clearly
16 mark such requests as optional and provide for
17 an estimate of the net price from the calculator
18 without requiring users to enter such informa-
19 tion; and

20 “(C) prohibit any personally identifiable in-
21 formation provided by users from being sold or
22 made available to third parties.”.

23 **SEC. 4. FUNDING.**

24 (a) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount au-
25 thorized to be appropriated to the Department of Edu-

1 cation to maintain the College Navigator website,
2 \$1,000,000 shall be available to carry out this Act and
3 the amendments made by this Act.

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

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