



# FACT SHEET

## EDUCATION & THE WORKFORCE COMMITTEE

### **Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act**

#### **THE PROBLEM:**

Despite repeated attempts to enhance transparency in the higher education system, students and families still struggle to access important information that will assist in their search for the right college or university. The federal government provides financial assistance for millions of students to use at the institution of their choice. Yet students and families face a deluge of data that often provides little to no useful information as they try to make this important decision.

To make matters worse, data that is available often ignores a large portion of students enrolled in the postsecondary education system or fails to capture crucial information students and families need to view the entire landscape of higher education. Despite numerous initiatives underway at the federal level that are supposed to provide clarity to prospective students, these efforts often add more confusion and uncertainty by presenting conflicting information with limited opportunity to compare different education options.

#### **THE SOLUTION:**

To help provide students and families with the information they need to make smart decisions about higher education, Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training Chairwoman Virginia Foxx (R-NC) and Rep. Luke Messer (R-IN) introduced the *Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act*. Recently passed by the Committee on Education and the Workforce with overwhelming bipartisan support, the legislation (H.R. 4983) would improve consumer information to provide a more complete picture of all student populations, streamline existing transparency efforts at the federal level to reduce confusion for students, and require better coordination by federal agencies to avoid duplication and confusion.

#### **H.R. 4983 – STRENGTHENING TRANSPARENCY IN HIGHER EDUCATION ACT:**

- Requires the secretary of education to create a consumer-tested College Dashboard that would display only key information students need when deciding which school to attend.
- Ensures the College Dashboard includes information on the completion rates of all students, including contemporary students and Pell Grant recipients.
- Instructs the secretary of education to provide a link to the College Dashboard page of each institution listed on a student's FAFSA to make sure students know this information is available.
- Directs the secretary of education to coordinate with other federal agencies to ensure all published higher education data is consistent with the information available on the College Dashboard.
- Improves current policies governing institutional net price calculators to give students a more accurate picture of the total cost of attending a particular institution.
- Streamlines and eliminates unnecessary information and federal transparency initiatives.

The *Strengthening Transparency in Higher Education Act* will take an important step toward strengthening the higher education system by improving transparency and ensuring all students have access to the information they need to make the best decision about their education.