

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5528

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to simplify the FAFSA, and
for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 20, 2016

Mr. HECK of Nevada (for himself, Mr. ROE of Tennessee, Mr. POLIS, and Mr. POCAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to simplify
the FAFSA, 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 “Simplifying the Appli-
5 cation for Student Aid Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. USING DATA FROM SECOND PRECEDING YEAR.**

7 Section 480(a)(1)(B) of the Higher Education Act of
8 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087vv(a)(1)(B)) is amended by striking
9 “may” in both places it appears and inserting “shall”.

1 **SEC. 3. CALCULATION OF ANNUAL ADJUSTMENT PERCENT-**
2 **AGE FOR FEDERAL PELL GRANTS.**

3 Section 401(b)(7)(C)(iv)(I) of the Higher Education
4 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a(b)(7)(C)(iv)(I)) is amended
5 by striking “calendar year” and inserting “fiscal year”.

6 **SEC. 4. FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION.**

7 (a) FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION.—Section 483 of the
8 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090) is
9 amended—

10 (1) in subsection (a)(3), by adding at the end
11 the following:

12 “(I) **FORMAT.**—Not later than 180 days
13 after the date of the enactment of the Simpli-
14 fying the Application for Student Aid Act, the
15 Secretary shall make the electronic version of
16 the forms under this paragraph available
17 through a technology tool that can be used on
18 mobile devices. Such technology tool shall, at
19 minimum, enable applicants to—

20 “(i) save data; and

21 “(ii) submit their FAFSA to the Sec-
22 retary through such tool.

23 “(J) **CONSUMER TESTING.**—In developing
24 and maintaining the electronic version of the
25 forms under this paragraph and the technology
26 tool for mobile devices under subparagraph (I),

1 the Secretary shall conduct consumer testing
2 with appropriate persons to ensure the forms
3 and technology tool are designed to be easily
4 usable and understandable by students and
5 families. Such consumer testing shall include,
6 but is not limited to—

7 “(i) current and prospective college
8 students, family members of such students,
9 and other individuals with expertise in stu-
10 dent financial assistance application proc-
11 esses;

12 “(ii) dependent students and inde-
13 pendent students meeting the requirements
14 under subsection (b) or (c) of section 479;
15 and

16 “(iii) dependent students and inde-
17 pendent students who do not meet the re-
18 quirements under subsection (b) or (c) of
19 section 479.”; and

20 (2) by amending subsection (f) to read as fol-
21 lows:

22 “(f) USE OF INTERNAL REVENUE SERVICE DATA
23 RETRIEVAL TOOL TO POPULATE FAFSA.—

24 “(1) SIMPLIFICATION EFFORTS.—The Sec-
25 retary shall—

1 “(A) make every effort to use data avail-
2 able from the Internal Revenue Service to re-
3 duce the amount of original data entry by appli-
4 cants and strengthen the reliability of data used
5 to calculate expected family contributions, in-
6 cluding through the use of technology to—

7 “(i) automatically populate the elec-
8 tronic version of the forms under this
9 paragraph with data available from the In-
10 ternal Revenue Service; and

11 “(ii) direct an applicant to appro-
12 priate questions on such forms based on
13 the applicant’s answers to previous ques-
14 tions; and

15 “(B) allow single taxpayers, married tax-
16 payers filing jointly, and married taxpayers fil-
17 ing separately to utilize the data retrieval tool
18 to its full capacity.

19 “(2) USE OF TAX RETURN IN APPLICATION
20 PROCESS.—The Secretary shall continue to examine
21 whether data provided by the Internal Revenue Serv-
22 ice can be used to generate an expected family con-
23 tribution without additional action on the part of the
24 student and taxpayer.

1 “(3) REPORTS ON FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION EF-
2 FORTS.—Not less than once every other year, the
3 Secretary shall report to the authorizing committees
4 on the progress of the simplification efforts under
5 this subsection.

6 “(4) REPORTS ON FAFSA ACCESS.—Not less
7 than once every 10 years, the Secretary shall report
8 to the authorizing committees on the needs of lim-
9 ited English proficient students using the FAFSA.”.

10 (b) FUNDING.—

11 (1) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount
12 authorized to be appropriated to the Department of
13 Education to maintain the Free Application for Fed-
14 eral Student Aid, \$3,000,000 shall be available to
15 carry out this Act and the amendments made by this
16 Act.

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

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