

114TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 3178

AN ACT

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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

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

4 **SEC. 2. COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.**

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

7 (1) in subsection (a)—

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

10 (B) in paragraph (3) in the matter pre-
11 ceding subparagraph (A), by striking “first-
12 time,”; and

13 (C) in paragraph (4), by striking “first-
14 time,”;

15 (2) in subsection (b)—

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

18 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-
19 time,”;

20 (3) by striking subsections (e) through (g), (j),
21 and (l);

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

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

26 “(d) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

1 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION
2 INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall develop and
3 make publicly available a website to be known as the
4 ‘College Dashboard website’ in accordance with this
5 section and prominently display on such website, in
6 simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the
7 most recent academic year for which satisfactory
8 data are available, the following information with re-
9 spect to each institution of higher education that
10 participates in a program under title IV:

11 “(A) A link to the website of the institu-
12 tion.

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

15 “(i) A four-year public institution of
16 higher education.

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

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

21 “(iv) A two-year public institution of
22 higher education.

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

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

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

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

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

9 “(C) The number of students enrolled at
10 the institution—

11 “(i) as undergraduate students; and

12 “(ii) as graduate students, if applica-
13 ble.

14 “(D) The student-faculty ratio.

15 “(E) The percentage of degree-seeking or
16 certificate-seeking undergraduate students en-
17 rolled at the institution who obtain a degree or
18 certificate within—

19 “(i) 100 percent of the normal time
20 for completion of, or graduation from, the
21 program in which the student is enrolled;

22 “(ii) 150 percent of the normal time
23 for completion of, or graduation from, the
24 program in which the student is enrolled;
25 and

1 “(iii) 200 percent of the normal time
2 for completion of, or graduation from, the
3 program in which the student is enrolled.

4 “(F) The average net price per year for
5 undergraduate students receiving Federal stu-
6 dent financial aid under title IV based on an in-
7 come category selected by the user from a list
8 containing the following income categories:

9 “(i) \$0 to \$30,000.

10 “(ii) \$30,001 to \$48,000.

11 “(iii) \$48,001 to \$75,000.

12 “(iv) \$75,001 to \$110,000.

13 “(v) \$110,001 to \$150,000.

14 “(vi) Over \$150,000.

15 “(G) A link to the net price calculator for
16 such institution.

17 “(H) The percentage of undergraduate
18 students who obtained a certificate or degree
19 from the institution who borrowed Federal stu-
20 dent loans under title IV, and the average Fed-
21 eral student loan debt incurred by an under-
22 graduate student who obtained a certificate or
23 degree from the institution and borrowed Fed-
24 eral student loans under title IV in the course
25 of obtaining such certificate or degree.

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

4 “(J) A link to the webpage of the institu-
5 tion containing campus safety data with respect
6 to such institution.

7 “(2) OTHER INFORMATION.—The Secretary
8 shall publish on Internet webpages that are linked to
9 through the College Dashboard website for the most
10 recent academic year for which satisfactory data is
11 available the following information with respect to
12 each institution of higher education that participates
13 in a program under title IV:

14 “(A) ENROLLMENT.—

15 “(i) The percentages of male and fe-
16 male undergraduate students enrolled at
17 the institution.

18 “(ii) The percentages of under-
19 graduate students enrolled at the institu-
20 tion—

21 “(I) full-time; and

22 “(II) less than full-time.

23 “(iii) In the case of an institution
24 other than an institution that provides all
25 courses and programs through distance

1 education, of the undergraduate students
2 enrolled at the institution—

3 “(I) the percentage of such stu-
4 dents who are from the State in which
5 the institution is located;

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

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

10 “(iv) The percentages of under-
11 graduate students enrolled at the institu-
12 tion, disaggregated by—

13 “(I) race and ethnic background;

14 “(II) classification as a student
15 with a disability;

16 “(III) recipients of a Federal Pell
17 Grant;

18 “(IV) recipients of assistance
19 under a tuition assistance program
20 conducted by the Department of De-
21 fense under section 1784a or 2007 of
22 title 10, United States Code, or other
23 authorities available to the Depart-
24 ment of Defense or veterans’ edu-

1 cation benefits (as defined in section
2 480); and

3 “(V) recipients of a Federal stu-
4 dent loan under title IV.

5 “(B) COMPLETION.—The information re-
6 quired under paragraph (1)(E), disaggregated
7 by—

8 “(i) recipients of a Federal Pell
9 Grant;

10 “(ii) recipients of a loan made under
11 part D of title IV (other than a Federal
12 Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan) who
13 did not receive a Federal Pell Grant;

14 “(iii) individuals who did not receive a
15 Federal Pell Grant or a loan made under
16 part D of title IV (other than a Federal
17 Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan);

18 “(iv) race and ethnic background;

19 “(v) classification as a student with a
20 disability;

21 “(vi) recipients of assistance under a
22 tuition assistance program conducted by
23 the Department of Defense under section
24 1784a or 2007 of title 10, United States
25 Code, or other authorities available to the

1 Department of Defense or veterans' edu-
2 cation benefits (as defined in section 480);
3 and

4 “(vii) male and female.

5 “(C) COSTS.—

6 “(i) The cost of attendance for full-
7 time undergraduate students enrolled in
8 the institution who live on campus.

9 “(ii) The cost of attendance for full-
10 time undergraduate students enrolled in
11 the institution who live off campus.

12 “(iii) The cost of tuition and fees for
13 full-time undergraduate students enrolled
14 in the institution.

15 “(iv) The cost of tuition and fees per
16 credit hour or credit hour equivalency for
17 undergraduate students enrolled in the in-
18 stitution less than full time.

19 “(v) In the case of a public institution
20 of higher education (other than an institu-
21 tion described in clause (vi)) and notwith-
22 standing subsection (b)(1), the costs de-
23 scribed in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

24 “(I) full-time students enrolled in
25 the institution who are residents of

1 the State in which the institution is
2 located; and

3 “(II) full-time students enrolled
4 in the institution who are not resi-
5 dents of such State.

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

14 “(I) full-time students enrolled at
15 the institution who are residents of
16 such geographic subdivision;

17 “(II) full-time students enrolled
18 at the institution who are residents of
19 the State in which the institution is
20 located but not residents of such geo-
21 graphic subdivision; and

22 “(III) full-time students enrolled
23 at the institution who are not resi-
24 dents of such State.

25 “(D) FINANCIAL AID.—

1 “(i) The average annual grant amount
2 (including Federal, State, and institutional
3 aid) awarded to an undergraduate student
4 enrolled at the institution who receives fi-
5 nancial aid.

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

14 “(iii) The cohort default rate (as de-
15 fined in section 435(m)) for such institu-
16 tion.

17 “(E) FACULTY INFORMATION.—

18 “(i) The ratio of the number of course
19 sections taught by part-time instructors to
20 the number of course sections taught by
21 full-time faculty, disaggregated by course
22 sections intended primarily for under-
23 graduate students and course sections in-
24 tended primarily for graduate students.

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

3 “(3) OTHER DATA MATTERS.—

4 “(A) COMPLETION DATA.—The Commis-
5 sioner of Education Statistics shall ensure that
6 the information required under paragraph
7 (1)(E) includes information with respect to all
8 students at an institution, including students
9 other than first-time, full-time students and
10 students who transfer to another institution, in
11 a manner that the Commissioner considers ap-
12 propriate.

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

21 “(4) INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISON.—The Sec-
22 retary shall include on the College Dashboard
23 website a method for users to easily compare the in-
24 formation required under paragraphs (1) and (2) be-
25 tween institutions.

1 “(5) UPDATES.—

2 “(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update
3 the College Dashboard website not less than an-
4 nually.

5 “(B) TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.—The
6 Secretary shall regularly assess the format and
7 technology of the College Dashboard website
8 and make any changes or updates that the Sec-
9 retary considers appropriate.

10 “(6) CONSUMER TESTING.—

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

23 “(B) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR
24 CHANGES.—The Secretary shall submit to the
25 authorizing committees any recommendations

1 that the Secretary considers appropriate for
2 changing the information required to be pro-
3 vided on the College Dashboard website under
4 paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the results of
5 the consumer testing conducted under subpara-
6 graph (A).

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

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

24 “(9) REFERENCES TO COLLEGE NAVIGATOR
25 WEBSITE.—Any reference in this Act to the College

1 Navigator website shall be considered a reference to
2 the College Dashboard website.”.

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

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

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

12 “(1) COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.—The
13 term ‘College Dashboard website’ means the College
14 Dashboard website required under subsection (d).”.

15 (c) DEVELOPMENT.—The Secretary of Education
16 shall develop and publish the College Dashboard website
17 required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act
18 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as amended by subsections
19 (a) and (b) of this section, not later than 1 year after
20 the date of the enactment of this Act.

21 (d) COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary shall maintain the College Navi-
22 gator website required under section 132 of the Higher
23 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as in effect
24 the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, in
25

1 the manner required under the Higher Education Act of
2 1965, as in effect on such day, until the College Dash-
3 board website referred to in subsection (c) is complete and
4 publicly available on the Internet.

5 **SEC. 3. NET PRICE CALCULATORS.**

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

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

11 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-
12 lowing new paragraphs:

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

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

20 “(i) be clearly labeled as a net price
21 calculator and prominently, clearly, and
22 conspicuously posted in locations on the
23 website of such institution where informa-
24 tion on costs and aid is provided and any

1 other location that the institution considers
2 appropriate; and

3 “(ii) match in size and font to the
4 other prominent links on the webpage
5 where the link for the calculator is dis-
6 played.

7 “(B) The webpage displaying the results
8 for the calculator shall specify at least the fol-
9 lowing information:

10 “(i) The net price (as calculated
11 under subsection (a)(2)) for such institu-
12 tion, which shall be the most visually
13 prominent figure on the results screen.

14 “(ii) Cost of attendance, including—

15 “(I) tuition and fees;

16 “(II) average annual cost of
17 room and board for the institution for
18 a full-time undergraduate student en-
19 rolled in the institution;

20 “(III) average annual cost of
21 books and supplies for a full-time un-
22 dergraduate student enrolled in the
23 institution; and

24 “(IV) estimated cost of other ex-
25 penses (including personal expenses

1 and transportation) for a full-time un-
2 dergraduate student enrolled in the
3 institution.

4 “(iii) Estimated total need-based
5 grant aid and merit-based grant aid from
6 Federal, State, and institutional sources
7 that may be available to a full-time under-
8 graduate student.

9 “(iv) Percentage of the full-time un-
10 dergraduate students enrolled in the insti-
11 tution that received any type of grant aid
12 described in clause (iii).

13 “(v) The disclaimer described in para-
14 graph (6).

15 “(vi) In the case of a calculator
16 that—

17 “(I) includes questions to esti-
18 mate the eligibility of a student or
19 prospective student for veterans’ edu-
20 cation benefits (as defined in section
21 480) or educational benefits for active
22 duty service members, such benefits
23 are displayed on the results screen in
24 a manner that clearly distinguishes

1 such benefits from the grant aid de-
2 scribed in clause (iii); or

3 “(II) does not include questions
4 to estimate eligibility for the benefits
5 described in subclause (I), the results
6 screen indicates that certain students
7 (or prospective students) may qualify
8 for such benefits and includes a link
9 to information about such benefits.

10 “(C) The institution shall populate the cal-
11 culator with data from an academic year that
12 is not more than 2 academic years prior to the
13 most recent academic year.

14 “(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF DATA COL-
15 LECTED BY THE NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—A net
16 price calculator for an institution of higher edu-
17 cation shall—

18 “(A) clearly indicate which questions are
19 required to be completed for an estimate of the
20 net price from the calculator;

21 “(B) in the case of a calculator that re-
22 quests contact information from users, clearly
23 mark such requests as optional and provide for
24 an estimate of the net price from the calculator

1 without requiring users to enter such informa-
2 tion; and

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

6 **SEC. 4. FUNDING.**

7 (a) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount au-
8 thorized to be appropriated to the Department of Edu-
9 cation to maintain the College Navigator website,
10 \$1,000,000 shall be available to carry out this Act and
11 the amendments made by this Act.

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

Passed the House of Representatives July 11, 2016.

Attest:

Clerk.

114TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

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AN ACT

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