

118TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. R. 9669

To provide for the basic needs of students at institutions of higher education.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2024

Mrs. TORRES of California (for herself, Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin, Ms. SCANLON, Ms. NORTON, Mr. THANEDAR, Mr. VARGAS, Ms. BARRAGÁN, Ms. CROCKETT, Ms. SÁNCHEZ, Mr. CORREA, Mr. GOLDMAN of New York, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. RUIZ, Mr. PANETTA, Ms. ESCOBAR, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. MCGOVERN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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## A BILL

To provide for the basic needs of students at institutions  
of higher education.

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 “Basic Assistance for  
5 Students In College Act” or the “BASIC Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. DATA SHARING.**

7 (a) AGREEMENTS.—The Secretary of Education, in  
8 coordination with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Sec-  
9 retary of Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary

1 of Health and Human Services, the Secretary of the  
2 Treasury, and the head of any other applicable Federal  
3 or State agency, shall maintain agreements—

4           (1) to securely share data among the respective  
5 Federal agencies of such Secretaries in order to  
6 identify students who have applied for Federal fi-  
7 nancial aid and who are enrolled at institutions of  
8 higher education (as defined in section 102 of the  
9 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002))  
10 who may be eligible for federally funded programs to  
11 support basic needs through—

12           (A) the supplemental nutrition assistance  
13 program established under the Food and Nutri-  
14 tion Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), a nu-  
15 trition assistance program carried out under  
16 section 19 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2028), or a  
17 nutrition assistance program carried out by the  
18 Secretary of Agriculture in the Northern Mar-  
19 iana Islands;

20           (B) the supplemental security income pro-  
21 gram under title XVI of the Social Security Act  
22 (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);

23           (C) the program of block grants to States  
24 for temporary assistance for needy families

1 under part A of title IV of the Social Security  
2 Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

3 (D) the special supplemental nutrition pro-  
4 gram for women, infants, and children estab-  
5 lished by section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act  
6 of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);

7 (E) the Medicaid program under title XIX  
8 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et  
9 seq.);

10 (F) Federal housing assistance programs,  
11 including tenant-based assistance under section  
12 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937  
13 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and public housing, as  
14 defined in section 3(b)(1) of such Act (42  
15 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(1));

16 (G) Federal child care assistance pro-  
17 grams, including assistance under the Child  
18 Care and Development Block Grant Act of  
19 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.) and the Child  
20 Care Access Means Parents in School Program  
21 under section 419N of the Higher Education  
22 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070e);

23 (H) the free and reduced price school  
24 lunch program established under the Richard

1 B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42  
2 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

3 (I) refundable credit for coverage under a  
4 qualified health plan under section 36B of the  
5 Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

6 (J) the Earned Income Tax Credit under  
7 section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of  
8 1986;

9 (K) the Child Tax Credit under section 24  
10 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

11 (L) any other federally funded program de-  
12 termined by the Secretary to be appropriate;  
13 and

14 (2) to coordinate efforts to provide assistance to  
15 institutions of higher education to facilitate the en-  
16 rollment of eligible students in the programs de-  
17 scribed in paragraph (1).

18 (b) INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUNDED PRO-  
19 GRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—

20 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 483 of the Higher  
21 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090) is amended  
22 by adding at the end the following:

23 “(e) INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUNDED PRO-  
24 GRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—

25 “(1) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

1           “(A) BENEFIT PROGRAM.—The term ‘ben-  
2           efit program’ means a program described in  
3           any of subparagraphs (A) through (L) of sec-  
4           tion 201(a)(1) of the Basic Assistance for Stu-  
5           dents In College Act.

6           “(B) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term ‘eli-  
7           gible student’ means any student who, as a re-  
8           sult of information submitted on the application  
9           for Federal student financial aid, has been de-  
10          termined by the Secretary (in consultation with  
11          the heads of applicable Federal agencies) to be  
12          potentially eligible for a benefit program.

13          “(2) PROVISION OF INFORMATION.—For each  
14          year for which an eligible student submits an appli-  
15          cation for Federal student financial aid, the Sec-  
16          retary shall send, in written and electronic form, to  
17          the eligible student information regarding potential  
18          eligibility for assistance under, and application proc-  
19          ess for, benefit programs.

20          “(3) INCLUSION.—The information provided  
21          under paragraph (2) shall include a description of  
22          the appropriate State or Federal resources to which  
23          to apply for each benefit program.”.

24          “(2) CONSULTATION.—The Secretary of Edu-  
25          cation shall consult with the Secretary of Agri-

1 culture, the Secretary of Health and Human Serv-  
2 ices, the Secretary of Housing and Urban Develop-  
3 ment, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the head  
4 of any other applicable Federal or State agency, in  
5 designing the written and electronic communication  
6 regarding potential eligibility for assistance under,  
7 and application process for, the benefit programs (as  
8 defined in subsection (e)(1) of section 483 of the  
9 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090)).

10 (c) FURTHER INFORMATION ON FEDERALLY FUND-  
11 ED PROGRAMS TO SUPPORT BASIC NEEDS.—Section 483  
12 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090)  
13 is amended—

14 (1) in subsection (a)(2)(E)—

15 (A) in clause (i), by striking “and” after  
16 the semicolon;

17 (B) in clause (ii), by striking the period at  
18 the end and inserting “; and”; and

19 (C) by adding at the end the following:

20 “(iii) an authorization under subpara-  
21 graph (D) and disclosing the information  
22 as described in clause (ii), the Secretary  
23 shall provide the applicant with notification  
24 of the appropriate Federal or State re-  
25 sources necessary to apply for Federal and

1 State programs that support basic needs.”;

2 and

3 (2) in subsection (c)(3)—

4 (A) by striking “may enter” and inserting  
5 “shall enter”; and

6 (B) by inserting “, and shall consult with  
7 the heads of applicable Federal agencies in de-  
8 signing the written and electronic communica-  
9 tion regarding potential eligibility for assistance  
10 under such programs” after “may be eligible”.

11 (d) REPORT.—The Secretary of Education, in coordi-  
12 nation with the Secretary of Agriculture, the Secretary of  
13 Housing and Urban Development, the Secretary of Health  
14 and Human Services, the Secretary of the Treasury, and  
15 the head of any other applicable Federal or State agency,  
16 shall prepare and submit to Congress a report that pre-  
17 sents summary statistics on students who have applied for  
18 Federal financial aid and who are enrolled at institutions  
19 of higher education (as defined in section 102 of the High-  
20 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1002)) and are expe-  
21 riencing student food insecurity and housing insecurity,  
22 disaggregated by race and ethnicity, income quintile, sta-  
23 tus as a first generation college student, Federal Pell  
24 Grant eligibility status, disability status, status as a stu-  
25 dent parent, sex (including sexual orientation and gender

1 identity), and other subgroups, as determined by such  
2 heads of agencies.

3 **SEC. 3. GRANTS TO SUPPORT THE BASIC NEEDS OF STU-**  
4 **DENTS.**

5 Title VIII of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20  
6 U.S.C. 1161a et seq.) is amended by adding at the end  
7 the following:

8 **“PART BB—GRANTS TO SUPPORT THE BASIC**  
9 **NEEDS OF STUDENTS**

10 **“SEC. 899. GRANTS TO SUPPORT THE BASIC NEEDS OF STU-**  
11 **DENTS.**

12 “(a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

13 “(1) BASIC NEEDS.—The term ‘basic needs’,  
14 with respect to a student, means the physiological  
15 and safety necessities that are central conditions for  
16 the student to learn, including—

17 “(A) nutritious and sufficient food;

18 “(B) safe, secure, and adequate housing  
19 (including to sleep, to study, to cook, and to  
20 shower);

21 “(C) health care to promote sustained  
22 mental and physical well-being;

23 “(D) high-quality and affordable childcare;

24 “(E) affordable technology and internet ac-  
25 cess;



1 “(F) accessible transportation;

2 “(G) personal hygiene and clothing; and

3 “(H) other costs described in paragraphs

4 (2) through (14) of section 472(a).

5 “(2) COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—

6 “(A) IN GENERAL.—The term ‘community

7 college’ means—

8 “(i) a public institution of higher edu-

9 cation at which—

10 “(I) the highest degree awarded

11 is an associate degree; or

12 “(II) an associate degree is the

13 most frequently awarded degree, in-

14 cluding a 2-year Tribal College or

15 University (as defined in section 316);

16 “(ii) a public postsecondary vocational

17 institution (as defined in section 102(c));

18 or

19 “(iii) at the designation of the Sec-

20 retary, in the case of a State in which

21 there is no community college operated or

22 controlled by the State that meets a defini-

23 tion under clause (i) or (ii), a college or

24 similarly defined and structured academic

25 entity—

1 “(I) that was in existence on  
2 July 1, 2023;

3 “(II) within a public 4-year insti-  
4 tution of higher education; and

5 “(III) at which—

6 “(aa) the highest degree  
7 awarded is an associate degree;

8 or

9 “(bb) an associate degree is  
10 the most frequently awarded de-  
11 gree.

12 “(3) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-  
13 ble institution’ means an institution of higher edu-  
14 cation (as defined in section 101 or 102(a)(1)(B)).

15 “(b) PLANNING GRANTS.—

16 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall award  
17 planning grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible  
18 institutions to enable the eligible institutions to con-  
19 duct research and planning in accordance with para-  
20 graph (2)—

21 “(A) to reduce incidences of—

22 “(i) student food insecurity;

23 “(ii) student housing insecurity; and

24 “(iii) students experiencing homeless-  
25 ness; and

1 “(B) to meet other basic needs of students.

2 “(2) ACTIVITIES.—An eligible institution receiv-  
3 ing a grant under this subsection shall use grant  
4 funds to carry out the following activities:

5 “(A) Establish a basic needs steering com-  
6 mittee that will be—

7 “(i) responsible for developing and ap-  
8 proving the basic needs strategy described  
9 in subparagraph (C); and

10 “(ii) comprised of relevant campus  
11 stakeholders, such as—

12 “(I) students who have experi-  
13 enced challenges in meeting basic  
14 needs;

15 “(II) student government rep-  
16 resentatives;

17 “(III) staff of the eligible institu-  
18 tion representing the areas of student  
19 financial aid, housing, dining, student  
20 affairs, academic advising, equity sup-  
21 port services, accessibility services,  
22 campus security, legal services, and  
23 health and well-being services (includ-  
24 ing counseling or psychological serv-  
25 ices);

1 “(IV) faculty;

2 “(V) relevant administrators, in-  
3 cluding local human services adminis-  
4 trators;

5 “(VI) community-based and  
6 other nonprofit organizations; and

7 “(VII) representatives from local  
8 governmental agencies.

9 “(B) Conduct research regarding—

10 “(i) the level of unmet basic needs at  
11 the eligible institution, disaggregated by  
12 race and ethnicity, income quintile, status  
13 as a first generation college student (as de-  
14 fined in section 402A(h)), Federal Pell  
15 Grant eligibility status, disability status,  
16 status as a student parent, sex (including  
17 sexual orientation and gender identity), or  
18 other subgroup as determined by the eligi-  
19 ble institution;

20 “(ii) the presence of institutional bar-  
21 riers (such as award displacement) and  
22 current institutional interventions to ad-  
23 dress basic needs insecurity;

24 “(iii) the presence of administrative  
25 barriers for students in applying, certifying

1 eligibility, and renewing applications for  
2 means-tested benefits, and interventions to  
3 address such barriers;

4 “(iv)(I) the resources and activities  
5 available to address basic needs of stu-  
6 dents, both on campus and off campus, as  
7 of the date of the research; and

8 “(II) the impact of such resources and  
9 activities; and

10 “(v) opportunities for coordination  
11 and collaboration between the eligible insti-  
12 tution and government or community-  
13 based organizations, such as—

14 “(I) the local office that admin-  
15 isters benefits under the supplemental  
16 nutrition assistance program estab-  
17 lished under the Food and Nutrition  
18 Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.)  
19 and carries out employment and train-  
20 ing programs under that Act, or the  
21 temporary assistance for needy fami-  
22 lies program and subsidized programs  
23 that meet the work requirements  
24 under part A of title IV of the Social  
25 Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

1           “(II) organizations that partici-  
2           pate in the Federal work-study pro-  
3           gram under part C of title IV; or

4           “(III) low-income housing assist-  
5           ance organizations, including such or-  
6           ganizations assisting with tenant-  
7           based assistance under section 8(o) of  
8           the United States Housing Act of  
9           1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and pub-  
10          lic housing (as defined in section 3(b)  
11          of that Act (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b))).

12          “(C) Develop a basic needs strategy that  
13          describes the means by which the eligible insti-  
14          tution will—

15               “(i) seek to address or meet the basic  
16               needs of students through on-campus and  
17               off-campus providers; and

18               “(ii) incorporate the research con-  
19               ducted under subparagraph (B), including  
20               with respect to the subgroups identified  
21               under clause (i) of that subparagraph, into  
22               the basic needs strategy.

23          “(D) Implement the strategy described in  
24          subparagraph (C), including by—

1           “(i) conducting outreach to encourage  
2 students to participate in programs that  
3 provide basic needs or reduce basic needs  
4 insecurity;

5           “(ii) educating students about Fed-  
6 eral, State, local, and Tribal assistance  
7 programs, supporting student applications  
8 for those programs, and providing case  
9 management and training for students to  
10 maximize the assistance that students and  
11 their families receive to reduce basic needs  
12 insecurity;

13           “(iii) coordinating and collaborating  
14 with Federal, State, local, and Tribal agen-  
15 cies or community-based organizations;

16           “(iv) hiring and training personnel to  
17 build infrastructure and implement pro-  
18 gramming to reduce basic needs insecurity  
19 at the eligible institution; and

20           “(v) carrying out other matters deter-  
21 mined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

22           “(3) GRANT AMOUNTS; DURATION.—

23           “(A) AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant  
24 under this subsection shall be not more than  
25 \$75,000.

1           “(B) DURATION.—A grant under this sub-  
2           section shall be for a period of not more than  
3           2 years.

4           “(4) REPORT.—Not later than 60 days after  
5           the end of the planning grant period under this sub-  
6           section, each eligible institution that receives such a  
7           grant shall submit to the Secretary a report that de-  
8           scribes the outcomes of the planning grant, regard-  
9           less of whether the eligible institution intends to  
10          apply for an implementation grant.

11          “(c) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—

12           “(1) AWARD.—

13           “(A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall  
14           award implementation grants, on a competitive  
15           basis, to eligible institutions to enable the eligi-  
16           ble institutions to develop infrastructure to  
17           meet the basic needs of students by—

18                   “(i) implementing—

19                           “(I) a basic needs strategy devel-  
20                           oped under subsection (b)(2)(C); or

21                           “(II) another existing basic needs  
22                           plan approved by the Secretary; and

23                   “(ii) carrying out the activities de-  
24                   scribed in paragraph (2).



1           “(B) ONGOING EXTERNAL FUNDING.—To  
2           be eligible to receive an implementation grant  
3           under this paragraph, an eligible institution  
4           shall identify, in the application for the grant,  
5           an ongoing non-Federal funding mechanism to  
6           support the activities carried out using grant  
7           funds after the expiration of the grant period.

8           “(2) ACTIVITIES.—An eligible institution receiv-  
9           ing a grant under this subsection shall use the grant  
10          funds to carry out at least 2 of the following activi-  
11          ties:

12                   “(A) Providing to eligible students free or  
13                   subsidized food, secure sleeping arrangements,  
14                   temporary housing, priority access to existing  
15                   on-campus child care, and other basic needs.

16                   “(B) Conducting outreach to students to  
17                   reduce stigma associated with, and educate and  
18                   encourage students to participate in, programs  
19                   and services (including programs and services  
20                   provided through grant funding) to meet basic  
21                   needs.

22                   “(C) Educating students about public as-  
23                   sistance programs (including State and local  
24                   public assistance programs, the supplemental  
25                   nutrition assistance program under the Food

1 and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et  
2 seq.), Federal housing assistance programs, and  
3 other income-based Federal assistance pro-  
4 grams), supporting student applications for  
5 those programs, and providing case manage-  
6 ment and training for students to maximize the  
7 public assistance that students and their fami-  
8 lies receive to meet basic needs.

9 “(D) Coordination and collaboration be-  
10 tween the eligible institution and government or  
11 community-based organizations, such as the  
12 local office that administers benefits through  
13 the supplemental nutrition assistance program  
14 under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7  
15 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.) or a low-income housing  
16 assistance organization.

17 “(E) Purchasing materials, equipment,  
18 transportation, or facilities to reduce incidences  
19 of food and housing insecurity and address the  
20 basic needs of students at the eligible institu-  
21 tion.

22 “(F) Hiring and training personnel to  
23 build and improve basic needs infrastructure  
24 and implement programming to provide assist-  
25 ance in applying for, and accessing, direct sup-

1 port services, financial assistance, or means-  
2 tested benefits programs to meet the basic  
3 needs of students.

4 “(G) Other activities or services deter-  
5 mined to be appropriate by the Secretary.

6 “(3) GRANT AMOUNTS; DURATION.—

7 “(A) AMOUNT.—The amount of a grant  
8 under this subsection shall be not more than  
9 \$1,000,000 for each 5-year period.

10 “(B) DURATION.—A grant under this sub-  
11 section shall be for a period of 5 years.

12 “(4) REPORT.—The Secretary shall prepare  
13 and submit to Congress a report that describes—

14 “(A) the impact on eligible students of  
15 grants provided under this subsection;

16 “(B) the obstacles faced by recipients of  
17 grants under this subsection;

18 “(C) successful outcomes of grants under  
19 this subsection;

20 “(D) best practices for the provision of  
21 basic services to eligible students; and

22 “(E) Federal and State policy barriers to  
23 meeting the basic needs of students at institu-  
24 tions of higher education.

1           “(5) BEST PRACTICES.—The Secretary shall  
2 disseminate to eligible institutions information about  
3 best practices, as described in paragraph (4)(D).

4           “(6) EVALUATION.—For the purpose of evalu-  
5 ating the effectiveness of funds awarded under this  
6 subsection, the Secretary shall conduct an evaluation  
7 of each grant under this subsection to determine the  
8 impact on students, including improvements in re-  
9 tention, progression, transfer, attainment, and basic  
10 needs security, as applicable.

11          “(d) RESERVATION; PRIORITY; EQUITABLE DIS-  
12 TRIBUTION.—

13           “(1) RESERVATION.—In awarding grants under  
14 subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary shall reserve—

15           “(A) an amount equal to not less than 25  
16 percent of the total amount available for grants  
17 under those subsections for grant awards to  
18 community colleges; and

19           “(B) an amount equal to not less than 25  
20 percent of the total amount available for grants  
21 under those subsections for grant awards to  
22 historically Black colleges and universities,  
23 Tribal Colleges and Universities, and other mi-  
24 nority-serving institutions.

1           “(2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under  
2 subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary shall give pri-  
3 ority to the following:

4           “(A) Eligible institutions with respect to  
5 which not fewer than 25 percent of enrolled  
6 students are students that are eligible to receive  
7 a Federal Pell Grant under subpart 1 of part  
8 A of title IV.

9           “(B) Eligible institutions described in sec-  
10 tion 371(a).

11           “(3) EQUITABLE DISTRIBUTION.—In awarding  
12 grants under subsections (b) and (c), the Secretary  
13 shall ensure an equitable distribution of grant  
14 awards to eligible institutions in States, based on  
15 State population.

16           “(e) PERSONNEL EXPENSES LIMITATIONS.—

17           “(1) PLANNING GRANTS.—An eligible institu-  
18 tion that receives a planning grant under subsection  
19 (b) may use not more than 50 percent of grant  
20 funds for personnel expenses.

21           “(2) IMPLEMENTATION GRANTS.—An eligible  
22 institution that receives an implementation grant  
23 under subsection (c) may use not more than 75 per-  
24 cent of grant funds for personnel expenses.

1       “(f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There  
2 is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section  
3 \$1,000,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2025 through  
4 2031, of which—

5               “(1) \$40,000,000 is authorized to be appro-  
6 priated to provide planning grants under subsection  
7 (b); and

8               “(2) \$960,000,000 is authorized to be appro-  
9 priated to provide implementation grants under sub-  
10 section (c).”.

○