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College Affordability and Innovation Act of 2014

Congress: 113 (2013–2015, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Education

Introduced: Jan 29, 2014

Current Status: Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S750-752)

Latest Action: Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S750-752) (Feb 4, 2014)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/113th-congress/senate-bill/1969>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Murphy, Christopher [D-CT]

Party: Democratic • State: CT • Chamber: Senate

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Murray, Patty [D-WA]	D · WA		Jan 29, 2014
Sen. Sanders, Bernard [I-VT]	I · VT		Jan 29, 2014
Sen. Schatz, Brian [D-HI]	D · HI		Jan 29, 2014

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	Senate	Referred To	Jan 29, 2014

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Education

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
113 HR 5674	Identical bill	Nov 17, 2014: Referred to the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Training.

College Affordability and Innovation Act of 2014 - Directs the Secretary of Education to award 5-year grants to up to 15 institutions of higher education (IHEs) to carry out new or existing high-quality programs designed to graduate students with certificates or degrees at significantly lower student costs and within shorter time periods than traditional programs.

Includes among those programs, those that:

- use online instruction;
- use direct assessments rather than credit hours or clock hours as the measure of student learning;
- integrate experiential learning and customized curricula to promote completion or alignment with medium- and long-term employment needs;
- allow students to be dually or concurrently enrolled in the postsecondary program and a secondary school, or a postsecondary program and a graduate program; or
- use any other innovative, evidence-based method of providing students with a cost-effective, high-quality, postsecondary education.

Authorizes the Secretary to waive the application to grantees of specified provisions of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA) that would inhibit their operation of innovative education programs.

Directs the Secretary to:

- establish and annually administer an evaluation and accountability process for the programs;
- review policies and identify those that impede the development and use of innovative methods of expanding access to, and success in, education;
- establish measures to assess the quality of the programs, including a minimum standard of quality that they must meet; and
- direct an independent third-party evaluator to conduct a final evaluation of the effectiveness of each program in providing students with a quality education at lower costs and within shorter time periods than traditional programs.

Requires the establishment of a Commission on Higher Education Accountability Standards, composed of higher education stakeholders, to make recommendations to the Secretary on a set of minimum accountability standards IHEs' undergraduate programs must meet with respect to affordability, accessibility, and value in order to participate in the programs under title IV (Student Assistance) of the HEA.

Directs the Secretary, after considering those recommendations, to establish IHE affordability, accessibility, and value accountability standards that, at a minimum, take into account each IHE's: (1) average or mean cost of attendance, minus grant aid; (2) percentage of enrolled students who are recipients of a Federal Pell Grant; and (3) student loan repayment rates.

Requires the Secretary to conduct an annual assessment of schools' compliance with those standards. Deems noncompliant schools to be on probation and requires them to work with the Secretary on a plan to achieve compliance within five years.

Requires schools that do not make continuous improvement toward the accountability standards 2 years, 3 years, and 4 years after being placed on probation to pay the Secretary an amount equal to 10%, 20%, and 30%, respectively, of the title IV funds they make available to undergraduate students.

Makes schools that fail to achieve compliance within five years of being placed on probation ineligible for title IV funds.

Directs the Secretary to place the amounts collected from noncompliant schools in a special fund that is to be used to award competitive grants to IHEs that meet or exceed the accountability standards. Requires grantees to use the funds to provide need-based aid to students who are eligible for Federal Pell Grants.

Actions Timeline

- **Feb 4, 2014:** Sponsor introductory remarks on measure. (CR S750-752)
- **Jan 29, 2014:** Introduced in Senate
- **Jan 29, 2014:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.