

## S 2111

Higher Education Innovation Act

**Congress:** 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

**Chamber:** Senate

**Policy Area:** Education

**Introduced:** Sep 30, 2015

**Current Status:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.

**Latest Action:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions. (Sep 30, 2015)

**Official Text:** <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2111>

### Sponsor

**Name:** Sen. Bennet, Michael F. [D-CO]

**Party:** Democratic • **State:** CO • **Chamber:** Senate

### Cosponsors (1 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Rubio, Marco [R-FL]	R · FL		Sep 30, 2015

### Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	Senate	Referred To	Sep 30, 2015

### Subjects & Policy Tags

**Policy Area:**

Education

### Related Bills

*No related bills are listed.*

## Higher Education Innovation Act

This bill amends the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a voluntary, alternative accreditation system for higher education providers.

The Department of Education (ED) must establish a process for approving innovation authorizers to authorize institutions of higher education or other providers that: promote student success outcomes and cost-effectiveness, agree to outcome-based oversight and reporting requirements, meet performance metrics, and comply with other specified requirements.

To apply to be an authorizer, an entity must agree to publicly disclose certain data and submit to ED details regarding its:

- experience and capabilities,
- financial ability to meet the requirements,
- authorization process,
- educational or subject matter focus,
- membership and relationship with industries and businesses, and
- conflict of interest controls.

An authorizer must use performance metrics relating to student learning, completion, and benefit to the student and affordability. The minimum threshold for each metric must meet or exceed the 60th-percentile student outcome.

Providers authorized using this process are eligible for Pell Grant and other federal funding, subject to specified funding requirements and allocations. An authorizer must agree to pay ED at least 25% of the annual balance of student loans that are in default and held by current or former students of providers that the authorizer approved.

Providers that meet the requirements of both an innovation authorizer and a recognized accrediting agency may hold both the accreditation and authorization or select which entity to use.

The authority for the alternative authorization system expires five years after enactment of this bill.

## Actions Timeline

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- **Sep 30, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Sep 30, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.