

S 2171

SOAR Reauthorization Act

Congress: 114 (2015–2017, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Education

Introduced: Oct 8, 2015

Current Status: Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-

Latest Action: Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-525. (Nov 4, 2015)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/114th-congress/senate-bill/2171>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Feinstein, Dianne [D-CA]

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

Cosponsors (3 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Booker, Cory A. [D-NJ]	D · NJ		Oct 8, 2015
Sen. Johnson, Ron [R-WI]	R · WI		Oct 8, 2015
Sen. Scott, Tim [R-SC]	R · SC		Oct 8, 2015

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs Committee	Senate	Hearings By (full committee)	Nov 4, 2015

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Education

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
114 HR 10	Related bill	Jul 14, 2016: Read the second time. Placed on Senate Legislative Calendar under General Orders. Calendar No. 561.

Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Reauthorization Act or the SOAR Reauthorization Act

This bill amends the District of Columbia Code to prohibit the Department of Education from limiting the number of eligible students receiving District of Columbia Opportunity Scholarship Program (OSP) scholarships, and from preventing otherwise eligible students from participating in the OSP because of:

- whether or not the student attended a private school for pre-elementary education in the previous school year; or
- whether or not the individual previously received a scholarship or participated in OSP, or was a member of the control group used by the Institute of Education Sciences to carry out previous OSP evaluations.

An eligible nonprofit organization's application for an OSP grant must include how it will ensure that it utilizes internal fiscal and quality controls.

Priorities for the award of scholarships to eligible students are modified to give priority to students who, in the preceding school year, attended a school identified as low-achieving according to the DC Office of the State Superintendent of Education (OSSE) (currently certain elementary or secondary schools identified for improvements, corrective action, or restructuring).

OSP-participating schools must:

- conduct criminal background checks on school employees who have direct and unsupervised interactions with students, and
- comply with all requests for data and information regarding certain reporting requirements.

Participating private schools must be provisionally or fully accredited or in the process of seeking accreditation.

The Department must make OSP funds available to eligible entities receiving a grant for administrative expenses and parental education and assistance, including streamlining of the application process.

Previously unobligated OSP funds must be used to award new scholarships to students.

The current OSP evaluation procedures under the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act (SOAR) are terminated and replaced with those specified in this Act.

The Department may withhold specified OSP funds provided to the DC Mayor for DC public and charter schools for noncompliance with SOAR requirements.

Funds provided under this Act to support DC public charter schools may be directed to the OSSE, which may transfer them to subgrantees that are:

- specific DC public charter schools in good standing or networks of such schools, or
- DC-based non-profit organizations with experience in successfully providing support or assistance to such schools or networks.

The Department and the Mayor shall revise the memorandum of understanding in effect to address the need to ensure that participating schools meet fire code standards and maintain certificates of occupancy.

The OSP is reauthorized through FY2021.

Actions Timeline

- **Nov 4, 2015:** Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. Hearings held. Hearings printed: S.Hrg. 114-525.
- **Oct 8, 2015:** Introduced in Senate
- **Oct 8, 2015:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs. (Sponsor introductory remarks on measure: CR S7274-7275)