

S 889

Protecting Students from Worthless Degrees Act

Congress: 118 (2023–2025, Ended)

Chamber: Senate

Policy Area: Education

Introduced: Mar 21, 2023

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. (Mar 21, 2023)

Official Text: <https://www.congress.gov/bill/118th-congress/senate-bill/889>

Sponsor

Name: Sen. Merkley, Jeff [D-OR]

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

Cosponsors (2 total)

Cosponsor	Party / State	Role	Date Joined
Sen. Durbin, Richard J. [D-IL]	D · IL		Mar 21, 2023
Sen. Blumenthal, Richard [D-CT]	D · CT		May 31, 2023

Committee Activity

Committee	Chamber	Activity	Date
Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee	Senate	Referred To	Mar 21, 2023

Subjects & Policy Tags

Policy Area:

Education

Related Bills

Bill	Relationship	Last Action
118 HR 1682	Identical bill	Apr 11, 2023: Referred to the Subcommittee on Economic Opportunity.

Protecting Students from Worthless Degrees Act

This bill makes an institution of higher education (IHE) ineligible to receive federal student financial assistance if it fails to meet certain requirements. It also requires an IHE to make certain certifications about its gainful employment programs.

Specifically, an IHE that offers a degree or certificate program to prepare students for entry into a profession that requires licensing or certification as a precondition for entry is not eligible to receive any federal student financial assistance unless (1) a student is fully qualified to take the required entry examination or be licensed or certified for the profession upon the successful completion of the program, and (2) the institution provides timely placement for all of the academically related pre-licensure requirements for entry into the profession (e.g., clinical placements or internships).

An IHE must also certify that each eligible gainful employment program meets specified requirements, including approval or accreditation by a recognized agency and satisfaction of applicable educational prerequisites for professional licensure or certification. If an IHE does not satisfy such prerequisites, it must notify a student who intends to enroll in the program and obtain a handwritten acknowledgement from the student that they wish to enroll.

Lastly, an IHE that offers distance education or correspondence courses must be legally authorized within each state in which its enrolled students are located.

Actions Timeline

- **Mar 21, 2023:** Introduced in Senate
- **Mar 21, 2023:** Read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions.