

114TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# H. R. 3178

To simplify and streamline the information regarding institutions of higher education made publicly available by the Secretary of Education, and for other purposes.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 23, 2015

Ms. FOXX (for herself, Mr. MESSER, Mr. SABLAN, Mr. KLINE, Mr. SCOTT of Virginia, Mr. WALBERG, Mr. HECK of Nevada, Mr. CARTER of Georgia, Ms. STEFANIK, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. DESAULNIER) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

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## A BILL

To simplify and streamline the information regarding institutions of higher education made publicly available by the Secretary of Education, and for other purposes.

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 “Strengthening Trans-  
5 parency in Higher Education Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.**

7 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—Section 132 of the Higher  
8 Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (a)—

2 (A) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-  
3 time,”;

4 (B) in paragraph (3) in the matter pre-  
5 ceeding subparagraph (A), by striking “first-  
6 time,”; and

7 (C) in paragraph (4), by striking “first-  
8 time,”;

9 (2) in subsection (b)—

10 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “first-  
11 time”; and

12 (B) in paragraph (2), by striking “first-  
13 time”;

14 (3) by striking subsections (e) through (g), (j),  
15 and (l);

16 (4) by redesignating subsections (h), (i), and  
17 (k) as subsections (c), (d), and (e), respectively; and

18 (5) by striking subsection (d) (as so redesign-  
19 ated) and inserting the following new subsection:

20 “(d) CONSUMER INFORMATION.—

21 “(1) AVAILABILITY OF TITLE IV INSTITUTION  
22 INFORMATION.—The Secretary shall develop and  
23 make publicly available a website to be known as the  
24 ‘College Dashboard website’ in accordance with this  
25 section and prominently display on such website, in

1 simple, understandable, and unbiased terms for the  
2 most recent academic year for which satisfactory  
3 data are available, the following information with re-  
4 spect to each institution of higher education that  
5 participates in a program under title IV:

6 “(A) A link to the website of the institu-  
7 tion.

8 “(B) An identification of the type of insti-  
9 tution as one of the following:

10 “(i) A four-year public institution of  
11 higher education.

12 “(ii) A four-year private, nonprofit in-  
13 stitution of higher education.

14 “(iii) A four-year private, for-profit  
15 institution of higher education.

16 “(iv) A two-year public institution of  
17 higher education.

18 “(v) A two-year private, nonprofit in-  
19 stitution of higher education.

20 “(vi) A two-year private, for-profit in-  
21 stitution of higher education.

22 “(vii) A less than two-year public in-  
23 stitution of higher education.

24 “(viii) A less than two-year private,  
25 nonprofit institution of higher education.

1                   “(ix) A less than two-year private,  
2                   for-profit institution of higher education.

3                   “(C) The number of students enrolled at  
4                   the institution—

5                   “(i) as undergraduate students; and

6                   “(ii) as graduate students, if applica-  
7                   ble.

8                   “(D) The student-faculty ratio.

9                   “(E) The percentage of degree-seeking or  
10                  certificate-seeking undergraduate students en-  
11                  rolled at the institution who obtain a degree or  
12                  certificate within—

13                  “(i) 100 percent of the normal time  
14                  for completion of, or graduation from, the  
15                  program in which the student is enrolled;

16                  “(ii) 150 percent of the normal time  
17                  for completion of, or graduation from, the  
18                  program in which the student is enrolled;  
19                  and

20                  “(iii) 200 percent of the normal time  
21                  for completion of, or graduation from, the  
22                  program in which the student is enrolled.

23                  “(F) The average net price per year for  
24                  undergraduate students receiving Federal stu-  
25                  dent financial aid under title IV based on an in-

1           come category selected by the user from a list  
2           containing the following income categories:

3                   “(i) \$0 to \$30,000.

4                   “(ii) \$30,001 to \$48,000.

5                   “(iii) \$48,001 to \$75,000.

6                   “(iv) \$75,001 to \$110,000.

7                   “(v) \$110,001 to \$150,000.

8                   “(vi) Over \$150,000.

9                   “(G) A link to the net price calculator for  
10           such institution.

11                   “(H) The percentage of undergraduate  
12           students who obtained a certificate or degree  
13           from the institution who borrowed Federal stu-  
14           dent loans and the average Federal student  
15           loan debt incurred by an undergraduate student  
16           who obtained a certificate or degree from the  
17           institution and borrowed Federal student loans  
18           in the course of obtaining such certificate or de-  
19           gree.

20                   “(I) A link to national and regional data  
21           from the Bureau of Labor Statistics on starting  
22           salaries in all major occupations.

23                   “(J) A link to the webpage of the institu-  
24           tion containing campus safety data with respect  
25           to such institution.

1           “(2) ADDITIONAL INFORMATION.—The Sec-  
2           retary shall publish on Internet webpages that are  
3           linked to through the College Dashboard website for  
4           the most recent academic year for which satisfactory  
5           data is available the following information with re-  
6           spect to each institution of higher education that  
7           participates in a program under title IV:

8                   “(A) ENROLLMENT.—

9                           “(i) The percentages of male and fe-  
10                           male undergraduate students enrolled at  
11                           the institution.

12                           “(ii) The percentages of under-  
13                           graduate students enrolled at the institu-  
14                           tion—

15                                   “(I) full-time; and

16                                   “(II) less than full-time.

17                           “(iii) In the case of an institution  
18                           other than an institution that provides all  
19                           courses and programs through distance  
20                           education, of the undergraduate students  
21                           enrolled at the institution—

22                                   “(I) the percentage of such stu-  
23                                   dents who are from the State in which  
24                                   the institution is located;

1                   “(II) the percentage of such stu-  
2                   dents who are from other States; and

3                   “(III) the percentage of such stu-  
4                   dents who are international students.

5                   “(iv) The percentages of under-  
6                   graduate students enrolled at the institu-  
7                   tion, disaggregated by—

8                   “(I) race and ethnic background;

9                   “(II) classification as a student  
10                  with a disability;

11                  “(III) recipients of a Federal Pell  
12                  Grant;

13                  “(IV) recipients of assistance  
14                  under a tuition assistance program  
15                  conducted by the Department of De-  
16                  fense under section 1784a or 2007 of  
17                  title 10, United States Code, or other  
18                  authorities available to the Depart-  
19                  ment of Defense or veterans’ edu-  
20                  cation benefits (as defined in section  
21                  480); and

22                  “(V) recipients of a Federal stu-  
23                  dent loan.

1           “(B) COMPLETION.—The information re-  
2           quired under paragraph (1)(E), disaggregated  
3           by—

4                   “(i) recipients of a Federal Pell  
5           Grant;

6                   “(ii) recipients of a loan made under  
7           part D (other than a Federal Direct Un-  
8           subsidized Stafford Loan) who did not re-  
9           ceive a Federal Pell Grant;

10                   “(iii) persons who did not receive a  
11           Federal Pell Grant or a loan made under  
12           part D (other than a Federal Direct Un-  
13           subsidized Stafford Loan);

14                   “(iv) race and ethnic background;

15                   “(v) classification as a student with a  
16           disability; and

17                   “(vi) recipients of assistance under a  
18           tuition assistance program conducted by  
19           the Department of Defense under section  
20           1784a or 2007 of title 10, United States  
21           Code, or other authorities available to the  
22           Department of Defense or veterans’ edu-  
23           cation benefits (as defined in section 480).

24           “(C) COSTS.—



1           “(i) The cost of attendance for full-  
2 time undergraduate students enrolled in  
3 the institution who live on campus.

4           “(ii) The cost of attendance for full-  
5 time undergraduate students enrolled in  
6 the institution who live off campus.

7           “(iii) The cost of tuition and fees for  
8 full-time undergraduate students enrolled  
9 in the institution.

10           “(iv) The cost of tuition and fees per  
11 credit hour or credit hour equivalency for  
12 undergraduate students enrolled in the in-  
13 stitution less than full time.

14           “(v) In the case of a public institution  
15 of higher education (other than an institu-  
16 tion described in clause (vi)) and notwith-  
17 standing subsection (b)(1), the costs de-  
18 scribed in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

19                   “(I) full-time students enrolled in  
20 the institution who are residents of  
21 the State in which the institution is  
22 located; and

23                   “(II) full-time students enrolled  
24 in the institution who are not resi-  
25 dents of such State.

1           “(vi) In the case of a public institu-  
2           tion of higher education that offers dif-  
3           ferent tuition rates for students who are  
4           residents of a geographic subdivision small-  
5           er than a State and students not located in  
6           such geographic subdivision and notwith-  
7           standing subsection (b)(1), the costs de-  
8           scribed in clauses (i) and (ii) for—

9                   “(I) full-time students enrolled at  
10                  the institution who are residents of  
11                  such geographic subdivision;

12                  “(II) full-time students enrolled  
13                  at the institution who are residents of  
14                  the State in which the institution is  
15                  located but not residents of such geo-  
16                  graphic subdivision; and

17                  “(III) full-time students enrolled  
18                  at the institution who are not resi-  
19                  dents of such State.

20           “(D) FINANCIAL AID.—

21                  “(i) The average annual grant amount  
22                  (including Federal, State, and institutional  
23                  aid) awarded to an undergraduate student  
24                  enrolled at the institution who receives fi-  
25                  nancial aid.

1           “(ii) The percentage of undergraduate  
2 students enrolled at the institution receiv-  
3 ing Federal, State, and institutional  
4 grants, student loans, and any other type  
5 of student financial assistance known by  
6 the institution, provided publicly or  
7 through the institution, such as Federal  
8 work-study funds.

9           “(iii) The cohort default rate (as de-  
10 fined in section 435(m)) for such institu-  
11 tion.

12           “(E) FACULTY INFORMATION.—

13           “(i) The ratio of the number of course  
14 sections taught by part-time instructors to  
15 the number of course sections taught by  
16 full-time faculty, disaggregated by course  
17 sections intended primarily for under-  
18 graduate students and course sections in-  
19 tended primarily for graduate students.

20           “(ii) The mean and median years of  
21 employment for part-time instructors.

22           “(3) OTHER DATA MATTERS.—

23           “(A) COMPLETION DATA.—The Commis-  
24 sioner of Education Statistics shall ensure that  
25 the information required under paragraph

1 (1)(E) includes information with respect to all  
2 students at an institution, including students  
3 other than first-time, full-time students and  
4 students who transfer to another institution, in  
5 a manner that the Commissioner considers ap-  
6 propriate.

7 “(B) ADJUSTMENT OF INCOME CAT-  
8 EGORIES.—The Secretary may annually adjust  
9 the range of each of the income categories de-  
10 scribed in paragraph (1)(F) to account for a  
11 change in the Consumer Price Index for All  
12 Urban Consumers as determined by the Bureau  
13 of Labor Statistics if the Secretary determines  
14 an adjustment is necessary.

15 “(4) INSTITUTIONAL COMPARISON.—The Sec-  
16 retary shall include on the College Dashboard  
17 website a method for users to easily compare the in-  
18 formation required under paragraphs (1) and (2) be-  
19 tween institutions.

20 “(5) UPDATES.—

21 “(A) DATA.—The Secretary shall update  
22 the College Dashboard website not less than an-  
23 nually.

24 “(B) TECHNOLOGY AND FORMAT.—The  
25 Secretary shall regularly assess the format and

1 technology of the College Dashboard website  
2 and make any changes or updates that the Sec-  
3 retary considers appropriate.

4 “(6) CONSUMER TESTING.—

5 “(A) IN GENERAL.—In developing and  
6 maintaining the College Dashboard website, the  
7 Secretary, in consultation with appropriate de-  
8 partments and agencies of the Federal Govern-  
9 ment, shall conduct consumer testing with ap-  
10 propriate persons, including current and pro-  
11 spective college students, family members of  
12 such students, institutions of higher education,  
13 and experts, to ensure that the College Dash-  
14 board website is usable and easily understand-  
15 able and provides useful and relevant informa-  
16 tion to students and families.

17 “(B) RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
18 CHANGES.—The Secretary shall submit to the  
19 authorizing committees any recommendations  
20 that the Secretary considers appropriate for  
21 changing the information required to be pro-  
22 vided on the College Dashboard website under  
23 paragraphs (1) and (2) based on the results of  
24 the consumer testing conducted under subpara-  
25 graph (A).

1           “(7) PROVISION OF APPROPRIATE LINKS TO  
2 PROSPECTIVE STUDENTS AFTER SUBMISSION OF  
3 FAFSA.—The Secretary shall provide to each student  
4 that submits a Free Application for Federal Student  
5 Aid described in section 483 a link to the webpage  
6 of the College Dashboard website that contains the  
7 information required under paragraph (1) for each  
8 institution of higher education such student includes  
9 on such Application.

10           “(8) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—The Sec-  
11 retary, in consultation with each appropriate head of  
12 a department or agency of the Federal Government,  
13 shall ensure to the greatest extent practicable that  
14 any information related to higher education that is  
15 published by such department or agency is con-  
16 sistent with the information published on the College  
17 Dashboard website.

18           “(9) REFERENCES TO COLLEGE NAVIGATOR  
19 WEBSITE.—Any reference in this Act to the College  
20 Navigator website shall be considered a reference to  
21 the College Dashboard website.”.

22           (b) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—The Higher Edu-  
23 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001 et seq.), as amended  
24 by subsection (a) of this section, is further amended—

1           (1) in section 131(h) (20 U.S.C. 1015(h)), by  
2           striking “College Navigator” and inserting “College  
3           Dashboard”; and

4           (2) in section 132(a) (20 U.S.C. 1015a(a)), by  
5           striking paragraph (1) and inserting the following  
6           new paragraph:

7           “(1) COLLEGE DASHBOARD WEBSITE.—The  
8           term ‘College Dashboard website’ means the College  
9           Dashboard website required under subsection (d).”.

10          (c) DEVELOPMENT.—The Secretary of Education  
11          shall develop and publish the College Dashboard website  
12          required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act  
13          of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as amended by subsections  
14          (a) and (b) of this section, not later than one year after  
15          the date of the enactment of this Act.

16          (d) COLLEGE NAVIGATOR WEBSITE MAINTENANCE.—The Secretary shall maintain the College Navigator website required under section 132 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as in effect the day before the date of the enactment of this Act, in the manner required under the Higher Education Act of 1965, as in effect on such day, until the College Dashboard website referred to in subsection (c) is complete and  
23          publicly available on the Internet.  
24

1 **SEC. 3. NET PRICE CALCULATORS.**

2 Subsection (c) of section 132 of the Higher Edu-  
3 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1015a), as redesignated  
4 by section 2(a)(4) of this Act, is amended—

5 (1) by redesignating paragraph (4) as para-  
6 graph (6); and

7 (2) by inserting after paragraph (3) the fol-  
8 lowing new paragraphs:

9 “(4) **MINIMUM REQUIREMENTS FOR NET PRICE**  
10 **CALCULATORS.**—Not later than 1 year after the date  
11 of the enactment of the Strengthening Transparency  
12 in Higher Education Act, a net price calculator for  
13 an institution of higher education shall meet the fol-  
14 lowing requirements:

15 “(A) The link for the calculator shall—

16 “(i) be clearly labeled as a net price  
17 calculator and prominently, clearly, and  
18 conspicuously posted in locations on the  
19 website of such institution where informa-  
20 tion on costs and aid is provided and any  
21 other location that the institution considers  
22 appropriate; and

23 “(ii) match in size and font to the  
24 other prominent links on the webpage  
25 where the link for the calculator is dis-  
26 played.



1           “(B) The webpage displaying the results  
2 for the calculator shall specify at least the fol-  
3 lowing information:

4           “(i) The net price (as calculated  
5 under subsection (a)(2)) for such institu-  
6 tion, which shall be the most visually  
7 prominent figure on the results screen.

8           “(ii) Cost of attendance, including—

9           “(I) tuition and fees;

10           “(II) average annual cost of  
11 room and board for the institution for  
12 a full-time undergraduate student en-  
13 rolled in the institution;

14           “(III) average annual cost of  
15 books and supplies for a full-time un-  
16 dergraduate student enrolled in the  
17 institution; and

18           “(IV) estimated cost of other ex-  
19 penses (including personal expenses  
20 and transportation) for a full-time un-  
21 dergraduate student enrolled in the  
22 institution.

23           “(iii) Estimated total need-based  
24 grant aid and merit-based grant aid from  
25 Federal, State, and institutional sources

1 that may be available to a full-time under-  
2 graduate student.

3 “(iv) Percentage of the full-time un-  
4 dergraduate students enrolled in the insti-  
5 tution that received any type of grant aid  
6 described in clause (iii).

7 “(v) The disclaimer described in para-  
8 graph (6).

9 “(vi) In the case of a calculator  
10 that—

11 “(I) includes questions to esti-  
12 mate the eligibility of a student or  
13 prospective student for veterans’ edu-  
14 cation benefits (as defined in section  
15 480) or educational benefits for active  
16 duty service members, such benefits  
17 are displayed on the results screen in  
18 a manner that clearly distinguishes  
19 such benefits from the grant aid de-  
20 scribed in clause (iii); or

21 “(II) does not include questions  
22 to estimate eligibility for the benefits  
23 described in subclause (I), the results  
24 screen indicates that certain students  
25 (or prospective students) may qualify

1 for such benefits and includes a link  
2 to information about such benefits.

3 “(C) The institution shall populate the cal-  
4 culator with data from an academic year that  
5 is not more than 2 academic years prior to the  
6 most recent academic year.

7 “(5) PROHIBITION ON USE OF DATA COL-  
8 LECTED BY THE NET PRICE CALCULATOR.—A net  
9 price calculator for an institution of higher edu-  
10 cation shall—

11 “(A) clearly indicate which questions are  
12 required to be completed for an estimate of the  
13 net price from the calculator;

14 “(B) in the case of a calculator that re-  
15 quests contact information from users, clearly  
16 mark such requests as optional and provide for  
17 an estimate of the net price from the calculator  
18 without requiring users to enter such informa-  
19 tion; and

20 “(C) prohibit any personally identifiable in-  
21 formation provided by users from being sold or  
22 made available to third parties.”.

23 **SEC. 4. FUNDING.**

24 (a) USE OF EXISTING FUNDS.—Of the amount au-  
25 thorized to be appropriated to the Department of Edu-

1 cation to maintain the College Navigator website,  
2 \$1,000,000 shall be available to carry out this Act and  
3 the amendments made by this Act.

4 (b) NO ADDITIONAL FUNDS AUTHORIZED.—No  
5 funds are authorized by this Act to be appropriated to  
6 carry out this Act or the amendments made by this Act.

○