

115TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 900

To improve the Federal Pell Grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

APRIL 7, 2017

Ms. HIRONO (for herself, Mr. REED, Mr. FRANKEN, Ms. STABENOW, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. HEINRICH, and Ms. KLOBUCHAR) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions

A BILL

To improve the Federal Pell Grant program, 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 “Year-Round Pell Grant
5 Restoration Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Congressional Budget Office reports on
9 any overall financial surplus or shortfall in the fund-
10 ing provided for the Federal Pell Grant program.

1 However, in recent years, in order to meet the max-
2 imum Federal Pell Grant level with the provided
3 level of funding, Congress has made cuts to the pro-
4 gram through imposing additional eligibility require-
5 ments for Federal Pell Grants and limiting the avail-
6 ability of year-round Federal Pell Grants, causing
7 significant uncertainty and reducing access to higher
8 education for millions of hardworking college stu-
9 dents.

10 (2) The “traditional student” who attends col-
11 lege for 4 years immediately after high school is now
12 a minority of college students today. Ambitious stu-
13 dents now need more flexibility to attend school
14 year-round while juggling work schedules.

15 (3) Section 1860 of the Department of Defense
16 and Full-Year Continuing Appropriations Act, 2011
17 (Public Law 112–10, 125 Stat. 169) eliminated the
18 provision of the Federal Pell Grant program of the
19 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a et
20 seq.) that allowed more than 1 Federal Pell Grant
21 awards per year, creating significant hardship for
22 many students trying to take courses over the sum-
23 mer or outside the traditional school calendar. Al-
24 lowing students to continue to receive Federal Pell

1 Grants in successive semesters, without a gap, would
2 reduce the time needed to complete their degrees.

3 **SEC. 3. YEAR-ROUND FEDERAL PELL GRANT STUDENTS.**

4 Section 401(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
5 (20 U.S.C. 1070a(b)) is amended by adding at the end
6 the following:

7 “(8)(A) Effective for the 2018–2019 award year and
8 each award year thereafter, the Secretary shall award an
9 eligible student a total of not more than 1½ Federal Pell
10 Grants during a single award year to permit such student
11 to work toward completion of an eligible program if, dur-
12 ing that single award year, the student—

13 “(i) has received a Federal Pell Grant for the
14 award year and is enrolled in an eligible program for
15 one or more additional payment periods during the
16 same award year that are not otherwise fully covered
17 by the student’s Federal Pell Grant; and

18 “(ii) is enrolled on at least a half-time basis
19 while receiving any funds under this section.

20 “(B) In the case of a student receiving more than
21 one Federal Pell Grant in a single award year under sub-
22 paragraph (A), the total amount of the Federal Pell
23 Grants awarded to such student for the award year may
24 exceed the maximum Federal Pell Grant available for an
25 award year.

1 “(C) Any period of study covered by a Federal Pell
2 Grant awarded under subparagraph (A) shall be included
3 in determining a student’s duration limit under subsection
4 (c)(5).

5 “(9) In any case where an eligible student is receiving
6 a Federal Pell Grant for a payment period that spans 2
7 award years, the Secretary shall allow the eligible institu-
8 tion in which the student is enrolled to determine the
9 award year to which the additional period shall be as-
10 signed, as it determines is most beneficial to students.”.

○