

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3393

To remove college cost as a barrier to every student having access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 20, 2021

Mr. GARCÍA of Illinois (for himself, Mrs. HAYES, Mr. BISHOP of Georgia, Mr. PANETTA, Mr. GALLEGO, Mr. COHEN, Ms. SCANLON, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mr. SOTO, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. PRESSLEY, Mr. BLUMENAUER, Mrs. MCBATH, Mr. CARBAJAL, Mr. BROWN, Mr. MOULTON, Mr. SIRES, Ms. MENG, Mr. TRONE, Ms. BUSH, Ms. TITUS, Mr. TORRES of New York, Mr. GRIJALVA, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mr. POCAN, Mrs. NAPOLITANO, Ms. CHU, Mr. WELCH, Mr. NADLER, Ms. TLAIB, Mr. RASKIN, Mr. AUCHINCLOSS, Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER, Mr. KHANNA, and Ms. OCASIO-CORTEZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor, and in addition to the Committee on the Budget, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

A BILL

To remove college cost as a barrier to every student having access to a well-prepared and diverse educator workforce, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Diversifying by Invest-
3 ing in Educators and Students to Improve Outcomes For
4 Youth Act” or the “Diversify Act”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 Congress finds the following:

7 (1) Schools predominantly enrolling historically
8 underserved students are often disproportionately
9 impacted by teacher shortages.

10 (2) According to Department of Education data
11 for the 2020–2021 school year, to date 43 States
12 are reporting shortages in mathematics teachers, 42
13 in science teachers, and 44 in special education
14 teachers.

15 (3) Data shows that, between 2009 and 2017,
16 teacher education enrollments dropped from 691,000
17 to 444,000, a 38-percent reduction. This amounts to
18 a decrease of about 340,000 professionals on their
19 way to becoming teachers in the year 2017, as com-
20 pared to 2009.

21 (4) Current data show that the impacts of
22 COVID–19 may be further exacerbating student ac-
23 cess to well-prepared and diverse teachers through
24 declining higher education enrollments and potential
25 increased turnover due to pandemic teaching condi-
26 tions, among other factors.

1 (5) About 80 percent of educators begin teach-
2 ing with a bachelor’s degree, yet the latest Federal
3 data show a nearly 6-percent decline in under-
4 graduate enrollment in the Spring of 2021. Enroll-
5 ment declines have inequitably impacted students of
6 color.

7 (6) In an August 2020 Census Bureau survey,
8 respondents cited their inability to pay as a factor
9 in their decision to forgo college.

10 (7) Research suggests that service scholarship
11 programs like the TEACH Grant Program are suc-
12 cessful when they are both administratively manage-
13 able and when subsidies are large enough to sub-
14 stantially offset training costs. Efforts to increase
15 the TEACH Grant award amount must be combined
16 with efforts to ensure that the program is adminis-
17 tratively manageable. In order for the TEACH
18 Grant Program to meet its full potential, the re-
19 search is clear that both criteria need to be ad-
20 dressed.

21 (8) The TEACH Grant’s award amount has not
22 increased since its creation in the bipartisan College
23 Cost Reduction and Access Act (Public Law 110–
24 84). In addition, due to the Budget Control Act of
25 2011 (Public Law 112–25), the maximum amount

1 of grant aid available under the TEACH Grant Pro-
2 gram of \$4,000 a year has been cut for a majority
3 of the program's existence. This comes at a time
4 when the yearly full cost of a public 4-year college
5 for an in-State student exceeds \$20,000. Further,
6 more than two-thirds of individuals entering the field
7 of education borrow money to pay for their higher
8 education, resulting in an average debt of about
9 \$20,000 for those with a bachelor's degree and
10 \$50,000 for those with a master's degree.

11 (9) Grant programs can eliminate or reduce the
12 need to borrow student loans in order to afford a
13 college education. This is important because a col-
14 lege student's potential debt burden influences the
15 student's decisions about what profession to enter,
16 with the result that the student is less likely to pur-
17 sue a career in education or take other low-paying
18 jobs after graduation if the student expects to incur
19 more debt. This is especially true for students of
20 color, who, according to a recent report, are more
21 likely to come from families that are unable to con-
22 tribute financially to their higher education.

23 (10) Students with disabilities, including stu-
24 dents of color with disabilities, are also likely to ac-
25 crue significant student loan debt. This often results

1 from limited ability to work while in school due to
2 the increased time needed for coursework.

3 (11) Teachers of color face unique barriers to
4 entering and staying in the profession. For example,
5 teachers of color are more likely to enter teaching
6 through alternative pathways due to the high cost of
7 traditional teacher preparation programs and the
8 debt burden faced by college students of color.
9 Lower quality pathways can result in less effective
10 teaching and high turnover rates. Research shows
11 that candidates who receive comprehensive prepara-
12 tion are 2 to 3 times more likely to stay in teaching
13 than those who receive little training. In many cases,
14 however, teachers of color are more likely to begin
15 teaching without having completed comprehensive
16 preparation and entering instead through alternative
17 routes that often skip student teaching and key
18 coursework, leaving teachers to learn on the job.

19 (12) Research shows that recruiting and retain-
20 ing a diverse teacher workforce is key to improving
21 outcomes for all students and for closing achieve-
22 ment gaps. While White students also benefit by
23 learning from teachers of color, the impact is espe-
24 cially significant for students of color, who have
25 higher test scores, are more likely to graduate from

1 high school, and more likely to succeed in college
2 when they have had teachers of color who serve as
3 role models and support their attachment to school
4 and learning.

5 **SEC. 3. AMENDMENTS TO THE TEACH GRANTS PROGRAM**
6 **UNDER THE HIGHER EDUCATION ACT OF**
7 **1965.**

8 Subpart 9 of part A of title IV of the Higher Edu-
9 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070g et seq.) is amend-
10 ed—

11 (1) in section 420L(1), by inserting “(except
12 that such term does not include an institution de-
13 scribed in subsection (a)(1)(A) of section 102)” after
14 “102”;

15 (2) in section 420M—

16 (A) in subsection (a)(1), by striking
17 “\$4,000” and inserting “\$8,000”;

18 (B) in subsection (b)(3), by striking the
19 second and third sentences and inserting the
20 following: “Any disbursement allowed to be
21 made by crediting the teacher candidate’s ac-
22 count shall be used for the full cost of attend-
23 ance (as defined in section 472).”; and

24 (C) in subsection (d)—

1 (i) in paragraph (1)(B), by striking
2 “\$16,000” and inserting “\$32,000”; and

3 (ii) in paragraph (2), by striking
4 “\$8,000” and inserting “\$16,000”; and

5 (3) in section 420N—

6 (A) in subsection (b)—

7 (i) by striking paragraphs (2) and (3);

8 (ii) by striking “an agreement” and
9 all that follows through “the applicant
10 will” and inserting “an agreement by the
11 applicant that the applicant will”;

12 (iii) by redesignating subparagraphs
13 (A) through (E) as paragraphs (1) through
14 (5), respectively, and moving the margins
15 of such paragraphs (as so redesignated) 2
16 ems to the left;

17 (iv) by redesignating clauses (i)
18 through (vii) as subparagraphs (A)
19 through (G), respectively, and moving the
20 margins of such subparagraphs (as so re-
21 designated) 2 ems to the left;

22 (v) in paragraph (2), as redesignated
23 by clause (iii), by striking “teach in a
24 school described in section 465(a)(2)(A)”
25 and inserting “teach in a school described

1 in section 465(a)(2)(A) or teach in a high-
2 need early childhood education program
3 (defined in section 200(9))”; and

4 (vi) in paragraph (3), as redesignated
5 by clause (iii)—

6 (I) in subparagraph (F), as re-
7 designated by clause (iv), by striking
8 “or” after the semicolon;

9 (II) in subparagraph (G), as re-
10 designated by clause (iv), by inserting
11 “or” after the semicolon; and

12 (III) by adding at the end the
13 following:

14 “(H) early childhood education;” and

15 (B) by striking subsection (c) and insert-
16 ing the following:

17 “(c) CERTIFICATE.—Upon the completion of the
18 service requirement in subsection (b), the Secretary shall
19 send to the recipient of a grant under this subpart an elec-
20 tronic certificate documenting the completion of such serv-
21 ice.”;

22 (C) by redesignating subsection (d) as sub-
23 section (e);

24 (D) by inserting after subsection (c) the
25 following:

1 “(d) PROHIBITION.—The Secretary may not institute
2 or create a monetary penalty for failure or refusal to com-
3 plete the service requirement under subsection (b).”; and

4 (E) in subsection (e), as redesignated by
5 subparagraph (C)—

6 (i) by striking “subsection
7 (b)(1)(C)(vii)” and inserting “subsection
8 (b)(3)(G)”; and

9 (ii) by striking “subsection (b)(1)”
10 and inserting “subsection (b)”.

11 **SEC. 4. AMENDMENT TO THE BALANCED BUDGET AND DEF-**
12 **ICIT CONTROL ACT.**

13 (a) EXEMPTION OF PROGRAM FROM SEQUESTRA-
14 TION.—Section 255(h) of the Balanced Budget and Emer-
15 gency Deficit Control Act of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 905(h)) is
16 amended by inserting after the item relating to “Supple-
17 mental Security Income Program (28–0406–0–1–609).”
18 the following new item:

19 “TEACH Grants under subpart 9 of part A of
20 title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965.”.

21 (b) APPLICABILITY.—The amendment made by this
22 section shall apply to any sequestration order issued under
23 the Balanced Budget and Emergency Deficit Control Act

1 of 1985 (2 U.S.C. 900 et seq.) on or after the date of
2 enactment of this Act.

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