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119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 10451

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish an emergency grant aid program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 16, 2026

Mr. MORELLE introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Workforce

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A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish an emergency grant aid program, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Emergency Grant Aid for College Students Act''.

SEC. 2. EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID GRANT PROGRAM.

Title VII of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070b et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following:

"PART F—EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID GRANTS

"SEC. 791. EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID GRANT PROGRAM.

''(a) EMERGENCY FINANCIAL AID GRANT PROGRAMS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary shall carry out a grant program to make grants, in accordance with subsection (b), to eligible entities to provide emergency financial aid grants to eligible students in accordance with subsection (c).

''(b) APPLICATION.—

''(1) IN GENERAL.—Each eligible entity desiring to carry out an emergency grant aid program under this section shall submit an application to the Secretary, at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require.

''(2) OUTREACH.—The Secretary shall, at least 60 days before each deadline to submit applications under paragraph (1), conduct outreach to institutions of higher education (including such institutions that are eligible for priority under this section) and systems of higher education to provide such institutions and systems with information on the opportunity to apply under paragraph (1) to carry out an emergency grant aid program under this section.

''(3) CONTENTS.—Each application under paragraph (1) shall include a description of the emer-

gency grant aid program to be carried out by the eligible entity, including—

"(A) an estimate of the number of emergency financial aid grants that such entity will make in an award year and how such eligible entity assessed such estimate;

"(B) the criteria the eligible entity will use to determine a student's eligibility for an emergency financial aid grant;

"(C) an assurance that an emergency for which an eligible student will be eligible to receive an emergency financial aid grant will include financial challenges related to any component of the student's cost of attendance or financial challenges that would impact the ability of an eligible student to continue the course of study of such student;

"(D) an assurance that the eligible entity, when applicable, will make information available to eligible students about the eligibility of such students, and their dependents, as applicable, for assistance under means-tested Federal benefit programs, including—

"(i) the supplemental security income program under title XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.);

"(ii) the supplemental nutrition assistance program under the Food and Nutrition Act of 2008 (7 U.S.C. 2011 et seq.), a nutrition assistance program carried out under section 19 of such Act (7 U.S.C. 2028), or a supplemental nutrition assistance program carried out under section 3(c) of the Act entitled 'An Act to authorize appropriations for certain insular areas of the United States, and for other purposes' (Public Law 95–348);

"(iii) the free and reduced price school lunch program established under the Richard B. Russell National School Lunch Act (42 U.S.C. 1751 et seq.);

"(iv) the program of block grants for States for temporary assistance for needy families established under part A of title IV of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 601 et seq.);

"(v) the special supplemental nutrition program for women, infants, and chil-

dren established by section 17 of the Child Nutrition Act of 1966 (42 U.S.C. 1786);

"(vi) the Medicaid program under title XIX of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1396 et seq.);

"(vii) Federal housing assistance programs, including tenant-based assistance under section 8(o) of the United States Housing Act of 1937 (42 U.S.C. 1437f(o)), and public housing, as defined in section 3(b)(1) of such Act (42 U.S.C. 1437a(b)(1));

"(viii) the refundable credit for coverage under a qualified health plan under section 36B of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986;

"(ix) the Earned Income Tax Credit under section 32 of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986; or

"(x) any other means-tested program determined by the Secretary to be appropriate;

"(E) how the eligible entity will administer the emergency grant aid program, including—

"(i) the process by which an eligible student may apply for and receive an emergency grant, which shall include an opportunity to apply online, and at least 1 opportunity to appeal a grant denial;

"(ii) the processes the eligible entity will use to respond to applications, approve applications, and disburse emergency financial aid grants, including outside of normal business hours;

"(iii) how the eligible entity will advertise emergency grants to eligible students; and

"(iv) how quickly the eligible entity will disburse emergency aid grants to students after applications have been submitted;

"(F) an assurance that the eligible entity will acknowledge receipt of a student's application and fund approved applications not later than 10 business days after the date of the approval;

"(G) an assurance that the eligible entity will conduct outreach to students to inform

them of the availability of, and process for applying for, emergency aid grants;

"(H) a description of how the eligible entity will prioritize eligible students with financial need in awarding emergency financial aid grants; and

"(I) any other information the Secretary may require.

"(4) PRIORITY.—In selecting eligible entities to carry out an emergency grant aid program under this section, the Secretary may give priority to—

"(A) an eligible entity that is a community college;

"(B) an eligible entity that is an institution of higher education described in section 371(a);

"(C) an eligible entity that is considered rural according to the National Center for Education Statistics for purposes of the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System;

"(D) an eligible entity in which not less than 33 percent of the students enrolled at such eligible entity are eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant; or

"(E) an eligible entity that—

"(i) has an admissions rate that is 50 percent or higher and is under-resourced; or

"(ii) is an eligible institution as defined in section 312(b).

"(c) USE OF FUNDS.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible entity may only use funds provided under this section to make emergency financial aid grants to eligible students.

"(2) AMOUNT OF AWARDS.—

"(A) IN GENERAL.—An eligible student may receive an amount under this section that would cause the amount of total financial aid received by such student to exceed the cost of attendance of the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled.

"(B) MAXIMUM AMOUNTS RECEIVED.—An eligible student may not receive a cumulative amount under this section for an academic year that is more than the maximum Federal Pell Grant available for such academic year.

"(3) DETERMINATIONS.—In determining eligibility for and awarding emergency financial aid grants under this section, an eligible entity may—

"(A) waive the amount of need calculation under section 471; and

"(B) utilize a contract with a scholarship-granting organization designated for the sole purpose of accepting applications from, or disbursing funds to, students enrolled in the institution of higher education, if such scholarship-granting organization disburses the full allocated amount provided to the institution of higher education to the student recipients.

"(d) REPORTING AND OVERSIGHT.—

"(1) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently than once annually, each eligible entity that receives a grant under this section shall submit to the Secretary a report on the progress of the eligible entity in carrying out the programs supported by such grant.

"(2) FORM OF REPORT.—The report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and containing such information as the Secretary may require. The Secretary shall issue uniform guidelines describing the information that shall be reported by grantees under such paragraph.

"(3) CONTENT OF REPORT.—The report under paragraph (1) shall include, at minimum, the following:

"(A) The average, minimum, and maximum amount of grants made available to eligible students, including any average, minimum, or maximum grant levels made to any specific subgroups of eligible students, including the subgroups listed in subparagraph (B).

"(B) A description of any specific subgroups of eligible students who were prioritized for the emergency financial aid grants, including students of color, low-income students, first-generation college students, students with disabilities, English learners, students experiencing homelessness, former foster youth, or student parents.

"(C) The number of eligible students who received an emergency financial aid grant, including the number of eligible students who received more than one such grant, and the number of eligible students in each of the subgroups described in subparagraph (B) who received an emergency financial aid grant, including the

number of eligible students in each of such subgroups who received more than one such grant.

"(D) The types of emergencies declared and frequencies of emergencies declared by eligible students.

"(E) The number of students who applied for an emergency financial aid grant, including the number of eligible students in each of the subgroups described in subparagraph (B) who applied for an emergency financial aid grant.

"(F) The number of students who were denied such a grant.

"(G) The number of students who appealed a denial of such grant.

"(H) The average amount of time it took an eligible entity to respond to requests for such a grant and the average amount of time it took the eligible entity to award or deny such a grant.

"(I) A description and amount of any institutional funds used to supplement emergency financial aid grants provided in accordance with this section.

"(J) Outcomes of the eligible students who received such a grant, including rates of persistence, retention, and completion.

"(K) A description of the method used to disburse emergency grants to students.

"(e) DETERMINATION OF AWARDS.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, an eligible entity that receives a grant under this section shall solely determine which students receive emergency financial aid grants under this section.

"(f) SPECIAL RULES.—An emergency financial aid grant awarded to a student under this section—

"(1) shall not be treated as estimated financial assistance or other financial assistance for the purposes of section 471 or section 480;

"(2) shall not be considered—

"(A) income or assets (including untaxed income and benefits under section 480(b)) in the computation of a student's expected family contribution or student aid index in determining the amount of aid for which the student is eligible under title IV for any academic year; and

"(B) in determining eligibility for other public benefits; and

"(3) shall not be included in the gross income of such student for purposes of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986.

"(g) ELIGIBILITY FOR BENEFITS.—No individual shall be determined to be ineligible to receive benefits provided under this section on the basis of citizenship, alienage, or immigration status.

"(h) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

"(1) COMMUNITY COLLEGE.—The term 'community college' means—

"(A) a degree-granting public institution of higher education (as defined in section 101) at which—

"(i) the highest degree awarded is an associate degree; or

"(ii) an associate degree is the most frequently awarded degree;

"(B) a 2-year Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b)(3));

"(C) a degree-granting Tribal College or University (as defined in section 316(b)(3)) at which—

"(i) the highest degree awarded is an associate degree; or

"(ii) an associate degree is the most frequently awarded degree; or

"(D) a branch campus of a 4-year public institution of higher education (as defined in section 101), if, at such branch campus—

"(i) the highest degree awarded is an associate degree; or

"(ii) an associate degree is the most frequently awarded degree.

"(2) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term 'eligible entity' means an institution of higher education.

"(3) ELIGIBLE STUDENT.—The term 'eligible student' means any student who is enrolled in an eligible entity.

"(4) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this Act, the term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101 or 102(c).

"(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section such sums as may be necessary for each of fiscal years 2027 through 2032.".

SEC. 3. PROHIBITION ON TRANSFER.

Notwithstanding section 430 of the General Education Provisions Act (20 U.S.C. 1231), sections 415 and

419 of the Department of Education Organization Act (20 U.S.C. 3475 and 3479), section 1535 of title 31, United States Code (commonly known as the ''Economy Act''), and section 1501 of title 31, United States Code, the Secretary of Education shall not enter into any agreement, or implement any agreement existing on the date of enactment of this Act, with another Federal agency, or procure services from, contract or carry out an agreement with, obtain any goods or services from, transfer activities or appropriations to, use the research, equipment, services, or facilities of, jointly carry out projects of common interest with, or enter into a similar arrangement with, another Federal agency, relating to the functions (including administering or operating programs, making grant awards, carrying out technical assistance, enforcing rights and requirements (including data collection and data sharing requirements)), conducting administrative and oversight functions, and monitoring grantees, related to this Act and the amendments made by this Act.

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