

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 1421

To prevent harassment at institutions of higher education, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2015

Mr. POCAN (for himself, Mr. LARSEN of Washington, Ms. MENG, Ms. TSONGAS, Ms. LEE, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. GRIJALVA, Mr. DELANEY, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. SWALWELL of California, Mr. KILMER, Mr. PETERS, Ms. CHU of California, Mr. DEUTCH, Mr. HONDA, Mr. SEAN PATRICK MALONEY of New York, Ms. SPEIER, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York, Ms. DELBENE, Ms. NORTON, Mrs. DAVIS of California, Mr. GARAMENDI, Ms. MCCOLLUM, Mr. LANGEVIN, Ms. KUSTER, Ms. BONAMICI, and Mr. RUIZ) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce

A BILL

To prevent harassment at institutions of higher 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 “Tyler Clementi Higher
5 Education Anti-Harassment Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. INSTITUTIONAL AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE IN-**
2 **FORMATION FOR STUDENTS.**

3 Section 485(f) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
4 (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)) is amended—

5 (1) by striking the subsection heading and in-
6 sserting “DISCLOSURE OF CAMPUS SECURITY AND
7 HARASSMENT POLICY AND CAMPUS CRIME STATIS-
8 TICS.”;

9 (2) in paragraph (6)(A)—

10 (A) by redesignating clauses (ii) and (iii)
11 as clauses (vi) and (vii), respectively; and

12 (B) by inserting after clause (i) the fol-
13 lowing:

14 “(ii) The term ‘commercial mobile service’ has
15 the meaning given the term in section 332(d) of the
16 Communications Act of 1934 (47 U.S.C. 332(d)).

17 “(iii) The term ‘electronic communication’
18 means any transfer of signs, signals, writing, im-
19 ages, sounds, or data of any nature transmitted in
20 whole or in part by a wire, radio, electromagnetic,
21 photoelectronic, or photooptical system.

22 “(iv) The term ‘electronic messaging services’
23 has the meaning given the term in section 102 of the
24 Communications Assistance for Law Enforcement
25 Act (47 U.S.C. 1001).

1 “(v) The term ‘harassment’ means conduct, in-
2 cluding acts of verbal, nonverbal, or physical aggres-
3 sion, intimidation, or hostility (including conduct
4 that is undertaken in whole or in part, through the
5 use of electronic messaging services, commercial mo-
6 bile services, electronic communications, or other
7 technology) that—

8 “(I) is sufficiently severe, persistent, or
9 pervasive so as to limit a student’s ability to
10 participate in or benefit from a program or ac-
11 tivity at an institution of higher education, or
12 to create a hostile or abusive educational envi-
13 ronment at an institution of higher education;
14 and

15 “(II) is based on a student’s actual or per-
16 ceived—

17 “(aa) race;

18 “(bb) color;

19 “(cc) national origin;

20 “(dd) sex;

21 “(ee) disability;

22 “(ff) sexual orientation;

23 “(gg) gender identity; or

24 “(hh) religion.”;

1 (3) by redesignating paragraphs (9) through
2 (18) as paragraphs (10) through (19), respectively;
3 and

4 (4) by inserting after paragraph (8) the fol-
5 lowing:

6 “(9)(A) Each institution of higher education partici-
7 pating in any program under this title, other than a for-
8 eign institution of higher education, shall develop and dis-
9 tribute as part of the report described in paragraph (1)
10 a statement of policy regarding harassment, which shall
11 include—

12 “(i) a prohibition of harassment of enrolled stu-
13 dents by other students, faculty, and staff—

14 “(I) on campus;

15 “(II) in noncampus buildings or on non-
16 campus property;

17 “(III) on public property;

18 “(IV) through the use of electronic mail
19 addresses issued by the institution of higher
20 education;

21 “(V) through the use of computers and
22 communication networks, including any tele-
23 communications service, owned, operated, or
24 contracted for use by the institution of higher
25 education or its agents; or

1 “(VI) during an activity sponsored by the
2 institution of higher education or carried out
3 with the use of resources provided by the insti-
4 tution of higher education;

5 “(ii) a description of the institution’s programs
6 to combat harassment, which shall be aimed at the
7 prevention of harassment;

8 “(iii) a description of the procedures that a stu-
9 dent should follow if an incident of harassment oc-
10 curs; and

11 “(iv) a description of the procedures that the
12 institution will follow once an incident of harassment
13 has been reported.

14 “(B) The statement of policy described in subpara-
15 graph (A) shall address the following areas:

16 “(i) Procedures for timely institutional action in
17 cases of alleged harassment, which procedures shall
18 include a clear statement that the accuser and the
19 accused shall be informed of the outcome of any dis-
20 ciplinary proceedings in response to an allegation of
21 harassment.

22 “(ii) Possible sanctions to be imposed following
23 the final determination of an institutional discipli-
24 nary procedure regarding harassment.

1 “(iii) Notification of existing counseling, mental
2 health, or student services for victims or perpetra-
3 tors of harassment, both on campus and in the com-
4 munity.

5 “(iv) Identification of a designated employee or
6 office at the institution that will be responsible for
7 receiving and tracking each report of harassment by
8 a student, faculty, or staff member.”.

9 **SEC. 3. ANTI-HARASSMENT COMPETITIVE GRANT PRO-**
10 **GRAM.**

11 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

12 (1) ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—The term “eligible enti-
13 ty” means—

14 (A) an institution of higher education, in-
15 cluding an institution of higher education in a
16 collaborative partnership with a nonprofit orga-
17 nization; or

18 (B) a consortium of institutions of higher
19 education located in the same State.

20 (2) HARASSMENT.—The term “harassment”
21 has the meaning given the term in section
22 485(f)(6)(A) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
23 (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)), as amended by section 2
24 of this Act.

1 (3) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
2 the Secretary of Education.

3 (b) PROGRAM AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary is au-
4 thorized to award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible
5 entities to enable eligible entities to carry out the author-
6 ized activities described in subsection (d).

7 (c) AMOUNT OF GRANT AWARDS.—The Secretary
8 shall ensure that each grant awarded under this section
9 is of sufficient amount to enable the grantee to meet the
10 purpose of this section.

11 (d) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—An eligible entity
12 that receives a grant under this section shall use the funds
13 made available through the grant to address one or more
14 of the types of harassment listed in section
15 485(f)(6)(A)(v)(II) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
16 (20 U.S.C. 1092(f)(6)(A)(v)(II)), as amended by section
17 2 of this Act, by initiating, expanding, or improving pro-
18 grams—

19 (1) to prevent the harassment of students at in-
20 stitutions of higher education;

21 (2) at institutions of higher education that pro-
22 vide counseling or redress services to students who
23 have suffered such harassment or students who have
24 been accused of subjecting other students to such
25 harassment; or

1 (3) that educate or train students, faculty, or
2 staff of institutions of higher education about ways
3 to prevent harassment or ways to address such har-
4 assment if it occurs.

5 (e) APPLICATION.—To be eligible to receive a grant
6 under this section, an eligible entity shall submit an appli-
7 cation to the Secretary at such time, in such manner, and
8 containing such information, as the Secretary may re-
9 quire.

10 (f) DURATION; RENEWAL.—A grant under this sec-
11 tion shall be awarded for a period of not more than 3
12 years. The Secretary may renew a grant under this section
13 for one additional period of not more than 2 years.

14 (g) AWARD CONSIDERATIONS.—In awarding a grant
15 under this section, the Secretary shall select eligible enti-
16 ties that demonstrate the greatest need for a grant and
17 the greatest potential benefit from receipt of a grant.

18 (h) REPORT AND EVALUATION.—

19 (1) EVALUATION AND REPORT TO THE SEC-
20 RETARY.—Not later than 6 months after the end of
21 the eligible entity's grant period, the eligible entity
22 shall—

23 (A) evaluate the effectiveness of the activi-
24 ties carried out with the use of funds awarded

1 pursuant to this section in decreasing harass-
2 ment and improving tolerance; and

3 (B) prepare and submit to the Secretary a
4 report on the results of the evaluation con-
5 ducted by the entity.

6 (2) EVALUATION AND REPORT TO CONGRESS.—

7 Not later than 12 months after the date of receipt
8 of the first report submitted pursuant to paragraph
9 (1) and annually thereafter, the Secretary shall pro-
10 vide to Congress a report that includes the following:

11 (A) The number and types of eligible enti-
12 ties receiving assistance under this section.

13 (B) The anti-harassment programs being
14 implemented with assistance under this section
15 and the costs of such programs.

16 (C) Any other information determined by
17 the Secretary to be useful in evaluating the
18 overall effectiveness of the program established
19 under this section in decreasing incidents of
20 harassment at institutions of higher education.

21 (3) BEST PRACTICES REPORT.—The Secretary
22 shall use the information provided under paragraph
23 (1) to publish a report of best practices for com-
24 bating harassment at institutions of higher edu-
25 cation. The report shall be made available to all in-

1 stitutions of higher education and other interested
2 parties.

3 (i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
4 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
5 \$50,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2016 through 2021.

6 **SEC. 4. EFFECT ON OTHER LAWS.**

7 Nothing in this Act shall be construed to invalidate
8 or limit rights, remedies, procedures, or legal standards
9 available to victims of discrimination under any other Fed-
10 eral law or law of a State or political subdivision of a
11 State, including title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964
12 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), title IX of the Education
13 Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C. 1681 et seq.), section
14 504 or 505 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 (29 U.S.C.
15 794, 794a), or the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
16 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.). The obligations imposed by this
17 Act are in addition to those imposed by title VI of the
18 Civil Rights Act of 1964 (42 U.S.C. 2000d et seq.), title
19 IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 (20 U.S.C.
20 1681 et seq.), section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of
21 1973 (29 U.S.C. 794), and the Americans with Disabil-
22 ities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12101 et seq.).

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