

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 5572

To provide consumer protections for students.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 18, 2014

Mr. CONYERS (for himself, Mr. COHEN, Mr. GRIJALVA, and Mr. ELLISON) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the Workforce, and in addition to the Committees on Armed Services and Veterans' Affairs, 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 provide consumer protections for students.

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 “Protecting Students
5 from Worthless Degrees Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. CONSUMER PROTECTIONS FOR STUDENTS.**

7 (a) IN GENERAL.—

8 (1) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (A) FEDERAL FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

10 PROGRAM.—The term “Federal financial assist-

1 ance program” means a program authorized
2 and funded by the Federal Government under
3 any of the following provisions of law:

4 (i) Title IV of the Higher Education
5 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070 et seq.).

6 (ii) Title I of the Workforce Invest-
7 ment Act of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801 et
8 seq.).

9 (iii) The Adult Education and Family
10 Literacy Act (20 U.S.C. 9201 et seq.).

11 (iv) Chapter 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, or 35
12 of title 38, United States Code.

13 (v) Chapter 101, 105, 106A, 1606,
14 1607, or 1608 of title 10, United States
15 Code.

16 (vi) Section 1784a, 2005, or 2007 of
17 title 10, United States Code.

18 (B) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDU-
19 CATION.—The term “institution of higher edu-
20 cation”—

21 (i) with respect to a program author-
22 ized under subparagraph (A)(i), has the
23 meaning given the term in section 102 of
24 the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
25 U.S.C. 1002);

1 (ii) with respect to a program author-
2 ized under subparagraph (A)(ii), has the
3 meaning given the term “postsecondary
4 educational institution” as defined in sec-
5 tion 101 of the Workforce Investment Act
6 of 1998 (29 U.S.C. 2801);

7 (iii) with respect to a program author-
8 ized under subparagraph (A)(iii), has the
9 meaning given the term “postsecondary
10 educational institution” as defined in sec-
11 tion 203 of the Adult Education and Fam-
12 ily Literacy Act (20 U.S.C. 9202);

13 (iv) with respect to a program author-
14 ized under subparagraph (A)(iv), has the
15 meaning given the term “educational insti-
16 tution” under section 3452 of title 38,
17 United States Code;

18 (v) with respect to a program author-
19 ized under subparagraph (A)(v), means an
20 educational institution that awards a de-
21 gree or certificate and is located in any
22 State; and

23 (vi) with respect to a program author-
24 ized under subparagraph (A)(vi), means an
25 educational institution that awards a de-

1 gree or certificate and is located in any
2 State.

3 (C) STATE.—

4 (i) STATE.—The term “State” in-
5 cludes, in addition to the several States of
6 the United States, the Commonwealth of
7 Puerto Rico, the District of Columbia,
8 Guam, American Samoa, the United States
9 Virgin Islands, the Commonwealth of the
10 Northern Mariana Islands, and the freely
11 associated States.

12 (ii) FREELY ASSOCIATED STATES.—
13 The term “freely associated States” means
14 the Republic of the Marshall Islands, the
15 Federated States of Micronesia, and the
16 Republic of Palau.

17 (2) CONSUMER PROTECTIONS.—Notwith-
18 standing any other provision of law, an institution of
19 higher education is not eligible to participate in a
20 Federal financial assistance program with respect to
21 any program of postsecondary education or training,
22 including a degree or certificate program, that is de-
23 signed to prepare students for entry into a recog-
24 nized occupation or profession that requires licensing
25 or other established requirements as a pre-condition

1 for entry into such occupation or profession, un-
2 less—

3 (A) the successful completion of the pro-
4 gram fully qualifies a student, in the Metropoli-
5 tan Statistical Area and State in which the stu-
6 dent resides (and in any State in which the in-
7 stitution indicates, through advertising or mar-
8 keting activities or direct contact with potential
9 students, that a student will be prepared to
10 work in the occupation or profession after suc-
11 cessfully completing the program), to—

12 (i) take any examination required for
13 entry into the recognized occupation or
14 profession in the Metropolitan Statistical
15 Area and State in which the student re-
16 sides, including satisfying all Federal,
17 State, or professionally mandated pro-
18 grammatic and specialized accreditation re-
19 quirements, if any; and

20 (ii) be certified or licensed or meet
21 any other academically related pre-condi-
22 tions that are required for entry into the
23 recognized occupation or profession in the
24 State; and

1 (B) the institution offering the program
2 provides timely placement for all of the aca-
3 demically related pre-licensure requirements for
4 entry into the recognized occupation or profes-
5 sion, such as clinical placements, internships, or
6 apprenticeships.

7 (3) REGULATIONS ON PRE-ACCREDITED PRO-
8 GRAMS.—The Secretary of Education shall promul-
9 gate regulations on requirements of an institution of
10 higher education with respect to any program of the
11 institution that is in a pre-accredited status, includ-
12 ing limitations on, or requirements of, advertisement
13 of the program to students. Such regulations shall
14 be consistent with the provisions of paragraph (2).

15 (4) LOAN DISCHARGE.—The Secretary of Edu-
16 cation shall promulgate regulations that condition
17 eligibility for an institution of higher education to
18 participate in any Federal financial assistance pro-
19 gram on the institution signing with each student
20 enrolled in any program of the institution that is in
21 a pre-accredited status, a loan discharge agreement.

22 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—This section shall be effec-
23 tive on the date that is 1 year after the date of enactment
24 of this Act.

○