

118TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

# S. 3477

To increase access to higher education by providing public transit grants.

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## IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

DECEMBER 12, 2023

Mr. CASEY (for himself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. VAN HOLLEN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs

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## A BILL

To increase access to higher education by providing public transit grants.

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 “Promoting Advance-  
5 ment Through Transit Help to College Act” or the  
6 “PATH to College Act”.

7 **SEC. 2. INCREASING ACCESS TO HIGHER EDUCATION**  
8 **THROUGH PUBLIC TRANSIT GRANTS.**

9 (a) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

1           (1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term “eligi-  
2 ble institution” means—

3                   (A) a community college;

4                   (B) a historically Black college or univer-  
5 sity;

6                   (C) a Tribal College or University (as de-  
7 fined in section 316 of the Higher Education  
8 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c)); or

9                   (D) a minority-serving institution.

10           (2) ELIGIBLE RECIPIENT.—The term “eligible  
11 recipient” means a public transit provider that is an  
12 eligible recipient under chapter 53 of title 49,  
13 United States Code, in partnership with 1 or more  
14 eligible institutions.

15           (3) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNI-  
16 VERSITY.—The term “historically Black college or  
17 university” has the meaning given the term “part B  
18 institution” in section 322 of the Higher Education  
19 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061).

20           (4) MINORITY-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The  
21 term “minority-serving institution” means an eligi-  
22 ble institution under section 371 of the Higher Edu-  
23 cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1067q).

24           (5) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means  
25 the Secretary of Transportation.

1 (b) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary may make grants  
2 under this section to eligible recipients to enable those eli-  
3 gible recipients to carry out projects described in sub-  
4 section (c) to better connect students with transportation  
5 to eligible institutions.

6 (c) ELIGIBLE PROJECTS.—An eligible recipient re-  
7 ceiving a grant under this section shall use grant funds  
8 to carry out one or more of the following activities to bet-  
9 ter connect students with transportation to one or more  
10 of the eligible institutions that are part of the eligible re-  
11 cipient partnership:

12 (1) Adding bus or rail stops or routes and com-  
13 plementary paratransit service that serve campuses  
14 and connect to surrounding areas or other cities.

15 (2) Increasing the frequency of service or ad-  
16 justing the time of bus, rail, or paratransit routes to  
17 allow students to get to and from their classes.

18 (3) Operating costs for service described in  
19 paragraphs (1) and (2) if such costs are eligible  
20 under section 5307 or section 5311 of title 49,  
21 United States Code.

22 (d) APPLICATION.—

23 (1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible recipient that de-  
24 sires a grant under this section shall submit an ap-  
25 plication to the Secretary at such time, in such man-

1 ner, and containing such information as the Sec-  
2 retary may require, including information on the ex-  
3 tent to which the proposed projects using grant  
4 funds will improve the availability of transit access  
5 for students.

6 (2) PRIORITY.—In awarding grants under this  
7 section, the Secretary shall give priority to an eligi-  
8 ble recipient whose partnership includes an eligible  
9 institution with respect to which more than 25 per-  
10 cent of students enrolled in that eligible institution  
11 receive a Federal Pell Grant.

12 (e) FEDERAL SHARE.—

13 (1) CAPITAL PROJECT.—Except as provided in  
14 section 5323(i) of title 49, United States Code, the  
15 Federal share of the net project cost of a capital  
16 project carried out using a grant under this section  
17 shall be not more than 80 percent.

18 (2) OPERATING COSTS.—The Federal share of  
19 net operating costs for a project carried out using a  
20 grant under this section shall be not more than 50  
21 percent.

22 (f) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is  
23 authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section—

24 (1) \$2,000,000 for fiscal year 2025;

25 (2) \$4,000,000 for fiscal year 2026;

- 1           (3) \$6,000,000 for fiscal year 2027;
- 2           (4) \$8,000,000 for fiscal year 2028; and
- 3           (5) \$10,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2029
- 4 through 2031.

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