

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4578

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make improvements to the TEACH Grant program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 27, 2019

Ms. WILSON of Florida (for herself, Mrs. HAYES, and Mr. TAKANO) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to make improvements to the TEACH Grant program, 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 “Build Effective Teach-
5 ers Through Essential Reforms to Teacher Education As-
6 sistance for College and Higher Education Grants Act of
7 2019” or the “BETTER TEACH Grants Act of 2019”.

1 **SEC. 2. REVISED DEFINITIONS OF TEACH GRANTS.**

2 Section 420L of the Higher Education Act of 1965
3 (20 U.S.C. 1070g) is amended by adding at the end the
4 following:

5 “(4) TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.—The
6 term ‘teacher preparation program’—

7 “(A) means a State-approved course of
8 study provided by an institution of higher edu-
9 cation, the completion of which signifies that an
10 enrollee has met all the State’s educational or
11 training requirements for initial certification or
12 licensure to teach in the State’s elementary
13 schools or secondary schools; and

14 “(B) may be a regular program or an al-
15 ternative route to certification, as defined by
16 the State that approved such course of study.”.

17 **SEC. 3. REVISIONS TO ESTABLISHING TEACH GRANT PRO-**
18 **GRAM.**

19 Section 420M of the Higher Education Act of 1965
20 (20 U.S.C. 1070g–1) is amended—

21 (1) in subsection (a)(1) by striking “in the
22 amount of” and all that follows through the period
23 at the end and inserting the following: “in the
24 amount of—

25 “(A) except as provided in subsection
26 (d)(4), \$8,000 dollars, to be available to a

1 teacher candidate who is enrolled as an under-
2 graduate junior at the eligible institution;

3 “(B) except as provided in subsection
4 (d)(4), \$8,000 dollars, to be available to a
5 teacher candidate who is enrolled as an under-
6 graduate senior at the eligible institution; and

7 “(C) \$4,000 for any year not described in
8 subparagraph (A) or (B) during which that
9 teacher candidate is in attendance at the insti-
10 tution.”; and

11 (2) in subsection (d)—

12 (A) in paragraph (1), by striking “under-
13 graduate” and inserting “associate, under-
14 graduate,”; and

15 (B) by adding at the end the following:

16 “(4) ASSOCIATE DEGREE STUDENTS.—

17 “(A) MAXIMUM AMOUNT FOR ASSOCIATE
18 DEGREE STUDY.—The period during which an
19 associate degree student may receive grants
20 under this subpart shall be the period required
21 for the completion of an associate’s degree
22 course of study pursued by the teacher can-
23 didate at the eligible institution at which the
24 teacher candidate is in attendance, except that
25 the total amount that a teacher candidate may

1 receive under this subpart for an associate's de-
2 gree course of study shall not exceed \$8,000.

3 “(B) EFFECT ON FURTHER UNDER-
4 GRADUATE OR POST-BACCALAUREATE STUDY.—

5 In the case of a teacher candidate who receives
6 a grant under this subpart for an associate's
7 degree course of study and who seeks to receive
8 a grant described in subparagraph (A) or (B)
9 of subsection (a)(1), the amount of such grant
10 shall be equal to—

11 “(i) one half of the amount that is
12 equal to \$16,000, minus the amount the
13 teacher candidate received under this sub-
14 part for the associate's degree course of
15 study of such candidate, to be available to
16 a teacher candidate who is enrolled as an
17 undergraduate junior at the eligible insti-
18 tution; and

19 “(ii) one half of the amount that is
20 equal to \$16,000, minus the amount the
21 teacher candidate received under this sub-
22 part for the associate's degree course of
23 study of such candidate, to be available to
24 a teacher candidate who is enrolled as an

1 undergraduate senior at the eligible insti-
2 tution.”.

3 **SEC. 4. REVISIONS TO TEACH GRANT APPLICATIONS AND**
4 **ELIGIBILITY.**

5 Section 420N of the Higher Education Act of 1965
6 (20 U.S.C. 1070g-2) is amended—

7 (1) in subsection (a)—

8 (A) in the heading of paragraph (2), by
9 striking “DEMONSTRATION OF TEACH” and in-
10 sert “TEACH”;

11 (B) in paragraphs (2)(B)(i), by striking
12 “or another high-need” and inserting “early
13 childhood education, or another high-need”; and

14 (C) in paragraph (2)(B)(ii), by striking “,
15 such as Teach for America,”;

16 (2) in subsection (b)—

17 (A) in paragraph (1)—

18 (i) in subparagraph (B), by inserting
19 before the semicolon at the end the fol-
20 lowing: “or in a high-need early childhood
21 education program (as defined in section
22 200(15));”;

23 (ii) in subparagraph (C)—

24 (I) by striking “or” at the end of
25 clause (vi);

1 (II) by redesignating clause (vii)
2 as clause (viii);

3 (III) by inserting after clause
4 (vi), as so amended, the following:

5 “(vii) early childhood education; or”;

6 and

7 (IV) in clause (viii), as so redesi-
8 gnated, by adding “and” at the end;

9 (iii) in subparagraph (D), by striking
10 “and” at the end; and

11 (iv) by striking subparagraph (E);

12 (B) by striking “and” at the end of para-
13 graph (2);

14 (C) by striking the period at the end of
15 paragraph (3) and inserting “; and”; and

16 (D) by adding at the end the following:

17 “(4) the Secretary will—

18 “(A) notify, or ensure that the applicable
19 loan servicer will notify, the applicant of—

20 “(i) the date on which submission of
21 the certification under paragraph (1)(D) is
22 required; and

23 “(ii) any failure to submit such cer-
24 tification; and

1 “(B) allow employers and borrowers to use
2 electronic signatures to certify such employ-
3 ment.”;

4 (3) in subsection (c)—

5 (A) by striking “In the event” and insert-
6 ing the following:

7 “(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2),
8 in the event”; and

9 (B) by adding at the end the following:

10 “(2) CLARIFICATION.—

11 “(A) APPLICATION.—Paragraph (1) may
12 only apply with respect to a recipient of a grant
13 under this subpart if—

14 “(i) after completing the course of
15 study for which the recipient received the
16 grant, such recipient does not serve as a
17 full-time teacher as required under sub-
18 section (b)(1) for at least—

19 “(I) 1 year, as certified under
20 subsection (b)(1)(D) on a date that is
21 not later than 5 years after the date
22 such course of study was completed;

23 “(II) 2 years, as certified under
24 subsection (b)(1)(D) on a date that is

1 not later than 6 years after the date
2 such course of study was completed;

3 “(III) 3 years, as certified under
4 subsection (b)(1)(D) on a date that is
5 not later than 7 years after the date
6 such course of study was completed;
7 or

8 “(IV) 4 years, as certified under
9 subsection (b)(1)(D) on a date that is
10 not later than 8 years after the date
11 such course of study was completed;
12 or

13 “(ii) the recipient elects to have such
14 grant treated as a loan in accordance with
15 such paragraph (1).

16 “(B) APPEAL.—A recipient of a grant may
17 appeal a decision to convert a loan under para-
18 graph (1).”; and

19 (4) in subsection (d)—

20 (A) by redesignating paragraph (2) as
21 paragraph (5);

22 (B) in paragraph (1), by striking “sub-
23 section (b)(1)(C)(vii)” and inserting “sub-
24 section (b)(1)(C)(viii)”; and

1 (C) by inserting after paragraph (1), the
2 following:

3 “(2) CHANGE OF SCHOOL DESCRIPTION OR
4 PROGRAM DEFINITION.—If a recipient of an initial
5 grant under this subpart teaches in a school or an
6 early childhood education program for an academic
7 year during which the school is identified as a school
8 described in section 465(a)(2)(A) or a program that
9 meets the definition of section 200(15), but the
10 school or program no longer meets such description
11 or definition during a subsequent academic year, the
12 grant recipient may fulfill the service obligation de-
13 scribed in subsection (b)(1) by continuing to teach
14 at that school or program.

15 “(3) CHANGE OF TEACHER DUTIES OR ASSIGN-
16 MENT.—If a recipient of an initial grant under this
17 subpart teaches as a full-time teacher described in
18 subsection (b)(1)(A), but the recipient no longer
19 meets such description during a subsequent aca-
20 demic year due to switching academic roles to that
21 of a full-time co-teacher, teacher leader, instruc-
22 tional or academic coach, department chairperson,
23 special education case manager, guidance counselor,
24 or school administrator within a school or program,
25 the grant recipient may fulfill the service obligation

1 described in subsection (b)(1) by continuing to work
 2 in any such academic role on a full-time basis at
 3 that school or program.

4 “(4) CHANGE IN HIGH-NEED FIELD STATUS.—
 5 If a recipient of an initial grant under this subpart
 6 teaches in a field at a school or an early childhood
 7 education program for an academic year during
 8 which the field is designated under subsection
 9 (b)(1)(C)(viii), but the field no longer is so des-
 10 ignated during a subsequent academic year, the
 11 grant recipient may fulfill the service obligation de-
 12 scribed in subsection (b)(1) by continuing to teach
 13 in such field at such school or early childhood edu-
 14 cation program.”.

15 **SEC. 5. REVISIONS TO TEACH GRANT DATA COLLECTION**
 16 **AND REPORTING.**

17 Section 420P of the Higher Education Act of 1965
 18 (20 U.S.C. 1070g–4) is amended to read as follows:

19 **“SEC. 420P. DATA COLLECTION AND REPORTING.**

20 “(a) DATA COLLECTION.—

21 “(1) AGGREGATE STUDENT DATA.—On an an-
 22 nual basis, the Secretary shall determine,
 23 disaggregate in accordance with paragraph (2), and
 24 make available to the public in accordance with
 25 paragraph (3), with respect to each institution (and

1 each category of institution listed in section 132(d)
2 that received a payment under this subpart in the
3 previous academic year, the following information:

4 “(A) The number and mean dollar amount
5 of TEACH Grants awarded to students at the
6 institution.

7 “(B) The number and proportion of
8 TEACH Grant recipients who exit their pro-
9 gram of study before completing the program.

10 “(C) The number and proportion of
11 TEACH Grant recipients who complete their
12 program of study and begin employment as a
13 teacher in the first academic year following the
14 year of such completion.

15 “(D) The number and proportion of indi-
16 viduals employed as teachers who received a
17 TEACH Grant and whose TEACH Grants are
18 converted into loans during the 8-year period
19 following the year in which the recipient com-
20 pleted the recipient’s program of study, set
21 forth separately for each year in such period.

22 “(E) The number and proportion of
23 TEACH Grant recipients who fulfill the terms
24 of their agreement to serve under section
25 420N(b) during the 8-year period following the

1 year in which the recipient completed the recipi-
2 ent's program of study, set forth separately for
3 each year in such period.

4 “(2) DISAGGREGATION.—The information de-
5 termined under paragraph (1)—

6 “(A) except in cases in which such
7 disaggregation would reveal personally identifi-
8 able information about an individual student,
9 shall be disaggregated by—

10 “(i) race;

11 “(ii) gender;

12 “(iii) socioeconomic status;

13 “(iv) Federal Pell Grant eligibility
14 status;

15 “(v) status as a first-generation col-
16 lege student (as defined in section
17 402A(h));

18 “(vi) veteran or active duty status;

19 “(vii) disability status;

20 “(viii) level of study (associate, under-
21 graduate, postbaccalaureate, or graduate,
22 as applicable);

23 “(ix) year of study (junior or senior
24 year, as applicable); and

1 “(x) each teacher preparation pro-
2 gram offered by an institution; and

3 “(B) may be disaggregated by any com-
4 bination of subgroups or descriptions described
5 in subparagraph (A).

6 “(3) AVAILABILITY OF DATA.—The information
7 determined under paragraph (1) shall—

8 “(A) remain available to the public for a
9 period of not less than 10 years after its initial
10 release by the Secretary; and

11 “(B) be updated as necessary to reflect the
12 most accurate and up-to-date information for
13 each institution for each year of data collection.

14 “(b) INFORMATION FROM INSTITUTIONS.—Each in-
15 stitution that receives a payment under this subpart shall
16 provide to the Secretary, on an annual basis, such infor-
17 mation as may be necessary for the Secretary to carry out
18 subsection (a).

19 “(c) REPORTS AND DISSEMINATION.—

20 “(1) INITIAL AND INTERIM REPORTS.—Not
21 later than one year after the date on which the first
22 TEACH Grant is awarded under this subpart after
23 the date of enactment of the BETTER TEACH
24 Grants Act of 2019, and annually thereafter, the
25 Secretary shall submit to the authorizing committees

1 a report that includes the information required
2 under paragraph (3).

3 “(2) FINAL REPORT.—

4 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than one
5 year after the date described in subparagraph
6 (B), the Secretary shall submit to the author-
7 izing committees a final report that includes the
8 information required under paragraph (3).

9 “(B) DATE DESCRIBED.—The date de-
10 scribed in this subparagraph is the later of—

11 “(i) the date on which the last service
12 agreement associated with a TEACH
13 Grant is completed; or

14 “(ii) the date on which the last
15 TEACH Grant awarded under this subpart
16 is converted into a loan.

17 “(3) ELEMENTS.—Each report under this sub-
18 section shall include, based on information deter-
19 mined under subsection (a), the following:

20 “(A) A review of the utilization of TEACH
21 Grants at teacher preparation programs at in-
22 stitutions that received a payment under this
23 subpart.

1 “(B) A review of TEACH Grant practices
2 that correlate with higher rates of completion of
3 agreements under section 420N(b).

4 “(C) Guidance and recommendations on
5 how effective utilization of TEACH Grants can
6 be replicated.

7 “(4) AVAILABILITY.—Each report under this
8 subsection shall be made available to the public in
9 an accessible format—

10 “(A) on a website of the Department of
11 Education; and

12 “(B) in any other format determined to be
13 appropriate by the Secretary.”.

14 **SEC. 6. STUDY AND REPORT ON SINGLE CERTIFICATION**
15 **FORM.**

16 (a) STUDY.—Not later than 1 year after the date of
17 the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education
18 shall conduct a study on the feasibility of developing a sin-
19 gle certification form that borrowers may use to electroni-
20 cally submit information with respect to—

21 (1) TEACH Grants under subpart 9 of part A
22 of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
23 U.S.C. 1070g et seq.);

1 (2) loan forgiveness under section 428J of the
2 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1078–
3 10);

4 (3) loan cancellation under section 460 of the
5 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087j);
6 and

7 (4) public service loan forgiveness under section
8 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
9 U.S.C. 1087e(m)).

10 (b) REPORT.—Not later than 1 year after the date
11 of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of Education
12 shall submit a report to Congress that includes—

13 (1) the results of the study required under sub-
14 section (a); and

15 (2) recommendations with respect to using a
16 single certification form that borrowers may use to
17 electronically submit information with respect to the
18 programs specified in paragraphs (1) through (4) of
19 such subsection.

○