

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 621

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants with minority serving institutions for the purpose of establishing verified delivery systems to address social and academic problems facing veterans enrolled at such institutions, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 28, 2015

Mr. VARGAS introduced the following bill; which was referred to the
Committee on Veterans' Affairs

A BILL

To authorize the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to make grants with minority serving institutions for the purpose of establishing verified delivery systems to address social and academic problems facing veterans enrolled at such institutions, 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 “Veteran Excellence
5 Through Education Act of 2015”.

1 **SEC. 2. DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS GRANTS TO**
2 **MINORITY SERVING INSTITUTIONS TO AD-**
3 **DRESS SOCIAL AND ACADEMIC PROBLEMS**
4 **FACING VETERANS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary of Veterans Affairs
6 may make grants to minority serving institutions for the
7 purpose of establishing verified delivery systems to address
8 social and academic problems facing veterans enrolled at
9 such institutions.

10 (b) USE OF FUNDS.—The recipient of a grant under
11 this section shall use the grant funds to carry out any
12 of the following activities for veterans enrolled at the insti-
13 tution receiving the grant:

14 (1) Providing education services, including post-
15 secondary education, courses in English as a second
16 language, general education development prepara-
17 tion, financial literacy workshops and courses,
18 generational diversity awareness programs, and
19 health and wellness programs.

20 (2) Activities designed to increase access to
21 workforce services, including on-job training, intern-
22 ships, skills training, job placement, and personal
23 development.

24 (3) Other types of support services, including
25 health and nutrition services, housing assistance,
26 transportation, and child care.

1 (4) Establishing a center for veteran student
2 success on the campus of the institution to provide
3 a single point of contact to coordinate comprehensive
4 support services for veterans who are enrolled in a
5 program of education offered by the institution.

6 (5) Establishing a veteran support team, in-
7 cluding representatives from the offices of the insti-
8 tution responsible for admissions, registration, finan-
9 cial aid, veterans benefits, academic advising, stu-
10 dent health, personal or mental health counseling,
11 career advising, and disabilities services, and any
12 other office of the institution that provides support
13 to veteran students on campus.

14 (6) Providing a coordinator whose primary re-
15 sponsibility is to coordinate the activities carried out
16 under the grant.

17 (7) Monitoring the rates of enrollment, persist-
18 ence, and completion of veterans who are enrolled in
19 a program of education offered by the institution.

20 (8) Developing a plan to sustain a center de-
21 scribed in paragraph (4) after the institution no
22 longer receives funds under this section.

23 (9) Providing outreach to veterans to encourage
24 them to enroll in a program of education offered by
25 the institution.

1 (10) Providing supportive instructional services
2 for veterans enrolled in a program of education of-
3 fered by the institution, including—

4 (A) personal, academic, and career coun-
5 seling;

6 (B) tutoring and academic skill-building
7 assistance; and

8 (C) assistance with special admissions and
9 transferring credits from previously attended
10 institutions of higher learning or other relevant
11 credits.

12 (11) Providing assistance to veterans admitted
13 for enrollment in a program of education offered by
14 the institution in obtaining student financial aid.

15 (12) Providing housing support for veterans en-
16 rolled in a program of education offered by the insti-
17 tution who live in institutional facilities or who com-
18 mute.

19 (13) Academic programs, orientation programs,
20 and other activities designed to ease the transition
21 to campus life for such veterans.

22 (14) Support for veteran student organizations
23 and veteran student support groups at the institu-
24 tion.

1 (15) Coordination of academic advising and ad-
2 missions counseling with military installations and
3 national guard units located in the same geographic
4 area as the institution.

5 (16) Other support services the institution de-
6 termines necessary to ensure the success of veterans
7 enrolled in a program of education offered by the in-
8 stitution in achieving educational and career goals.

9 (c) ELIGIBILITY.—To be eligible to receive a grant
10 under this section, a minority serving institution shall sub-
11 mit to the Secretary an application containing a program
12 plan containing a strategy for meeting the needs of vet-
13 erans enrolled in the institution. Such a plan shall in-
14 clude—

15 (1) an identification of the population to be
16 served;

17 (2) an identification of the education and em-
18 ployment needs of the population to be served and
19 the manner in which the activities proposed to be
20 provided using grant funds are designed to strength-
21 en the ability of such individuals to achieve their
22 higher education goals;

23 (3) a description of the activities proposed to be
24 provided using grant funds and the manner in which
25 such activities would be integrated with other appro-

1 appropriate activities carried out by or at the institution;
2 and

3 (4) a description, developed in consultation with
4 the Secretary, of the performance measures pro-
5 posed to be used to assess the performance of the
6 institution in carrying out activities using grant
7 funds.

8 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

9 (1) The term “minority serving institution”
10 means a historically Black college or university, a
11 Hispanic-serving institution, a Tribal College or Uni-
12 versity, or a Predominantly Black Institution.

13 (2) The term “historically Black college” has
14 the meaning given the term “part B institution” as
15 defined in section 322(2) of the Higher Education
16 Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2)).

17 (3) The term “Hispanic-serving institution” has
18 the meaning given that term in as section 502(a)(5)
19 of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1101a(a)(5)).

20 (4) The term “Tribal College or University”
21 has the meaning given that term in section
22 316(b)(3) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)(3)).

23 (5) The term “Predominantly Black Institu-
24 tion” has the meaning given that term in section
25 318(b)(6) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1059e(b)(6)).

1 (e) TERMINATION.—The Secretary may only make a
2 grant under this section during fiscal years 2016 through
3 2021.

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