

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. 7953

To establish a grant program in the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to fund the establishment of centers of excellence to support research, development and planning, implementation, and evaluation of effective programs in financial literacy education for young people and families ages 8 through 24 years old, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 7, 2020

Mr. CARSON of Indiana introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Financial Services, and in addition to the Committee on Education and Labor, 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 establish a grant program in the Bureau of Consumer Financial Protection to fund the establishment of centers of excellence to support research, development and planning, implementation, and evaluation of effective programs in financial literacy education for young people and families ages 8 through 24 years old, 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,*

1 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

2 This Act may be cited as the “Young Americans Fi-
3 nancial Literacy Act”.

4 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

5 The Congress finds as follows:

6 (1) That 88 percent of Americans believe fi-
7 nance education should be taught in schools and 92
8 percent of K–12 teachers believe that financial edu-
9 cation should be taught in school, but only 12 per-
10 cent of teachers actually teach the subject.

11 (2) According to a 2020 survey, less than half
12 of states require high school students to take a
13 course on personal finance, and less than 17 percent
14 of high schoolers were required to take a one semes-
15 ter personal finance course.

16 (3) For the fourth year in a row, more than one
17 third of surveyed consumers gave themselves a “B”
18 when grading their own level of basic financial lit-
19 eracy. Less than one-fifth of Americans gave them-
20 selves an “A”. Most adults feel that their financial
21 literacy skills are inadequate, yet they do not rely on
22 anyone else to handle their finances; they feel it is
23 important to know more but have received no finan-
24 cial education.

25 (4) The sudden disruptions caused by the
26 spread of COVID–19 are presenting economic chal-

1 lenges with growing consequences. While some fac-
2 tors affecting financial well-being are beyond indi-
3 vidual control, financial literacy can help people bet-
4 ter manage their finances through times of hardship.

5 (5) It is necessary to respond immediately to
6 the pressing needs of individuals faced with the loss
7 of their financial stability; however increased atten-
8 tion must also be paid to financial literacy education
9 reform and long-term solutions to prevent future
10 personal financial disasters.

11 (6) There is an urgent need to respond to the
12 COVID–19 economic recovery with research-based
13 financial literacy education programs to reach indi-
14 viduals at all ages and socioeconomic levels, particu-
15 larly those facing unique and challenging financial
16 situations, such as high school graduates entering
17 the workforce, soon-to-be and recent college grad-
18 uates, young families, and the unique needs of mili-
19 tary personnel and their families.

20 (7) High school and college students who are
21 exposed to cumulative financial education show an
22 increase in financial knowledge, which in turn drives
23 increasingly responsible behavior as they become
24 young adults.

1 (8) The majority (52 percent) of young adults
2 between the ages of 23–28 consider “making better
3 choices about managing money”, the single most im-
4 portant issue for individual Americans to act on
5 today.

6 (9) According to the Government Accountability
7 Office, giving Americans the information they need
8 to make effective financial decisions can be key to
9 their well-being and to the country’s economic
10 health. The current pandemic, in which 88 percent
11 of Americans say is causing stress on their personal
12 finances, underscores the need to improve individ-
13 uals’ financial literacy and empower all Americans to
14 make informed financial decisions. This is especially
15 true for young people as they are earning their first
16 paychecks, securing student aid, and establishing
17 their financial independence. Therefore, focusing
18 economic education and financial literacy efforts and
19 best practices for young people between the ages of
20 8–24 is of utmost importance.

21 **SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION FOR FUNDING THE ESTABLISH-**
22 **MENT OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN FI-**
23 **NANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION.**

24 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Consumer Financial Protec-
25 tion Act of 2010 (12 U.S.C. 5481 et seq.) is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating section 1037 as section
2 1038; and

3 (2) by inserting after section 1036 the fol-
4 lowing:

5 **“SEC. 1037. AUTHORIZATION FOR FUNDING THE ESTAB-**
6 **LISHMENT OF CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE IN**
7 **FINANCIAL LITERACY EDUCATION.**

8 “(a) IN GENERAL.—The Director of the Bureau, in
9 consultation with the Financial Literacy and Education
10 Commission established under the Financial Literacy and
11 Education Improvement Act, shall make competitive
12 grants to and enter into agreements with eligible institu-
13 tions to establish centers of excellence to support research,
14 development and planning, implementation, and evalua-
15 tion of effective programs in financial literacy education
16 for young people and families ages 8 through 24 years
17 old.

18 “(b) AUTHORIZED ACTIVITIES.—Activities author-
19 ized to be funded by grants made under subsection (a)
20 shall include the following:

21 “(1) Developing and implementing comprehen-
22 sive research based financial literacy education pro-
23 grams for young people—

24 “(A) based on a set of core competencies
25 and concepts established by the Director, in-

cluding goal setting, planning, budgeting, managing money or transactions, tools and structures, behaviors, consequences, both long- and short-term savings, managing debt and earnings; and

“(B) which can be incorporated into educational settings through existing academic content areas, including materials that appropriately serve various segments of at-risk populations, particularly minority and disadvantaged individuals.

“(2) Designing instructional materials using evidence-based content for young families and conducting related outreach activities to address unique life situations and financial pitfalls, including bankruptcy, foreclosure, credit card misuse, and predatory lending.

“(3) Developing and supporting the delivery of professional development programs in financial literacy education to assure competence and accountability in the delivery system.

“(4) Improving access to, and dissemination of, financial literacy information for young people and families.

1 “(5) Reducing student loan default rates by de-
2 veloping programs to help individuals better under-
3 stand how to manage educational debt through sus-
4 tained educational programs for college students.

5 “(6) Conducting ongoing research and evalua-
6 tion of financial literacy education programs to as-
7 sure learning of defined skills and knowledge, and
8 retention of learning.

9 “(7) Developing research-based assessment and
10 accountability of the appropriate applications of
11 learning over short and long terms to measure effec-
12 tiveness of authorized activities.

13 “(c) PRIORITY FOR CERTAIN APPLICATIONS.—The
14 Director shall give a priority to applications that—

15 “(1) provide clear definitions of ‘financial lit-
16 eracy’ and ‘financially literate’ to clarify educational
17 outcomes;

18 “(2) establish parameters for identifying the
19 types of programs that most effectively reach young
20 people and families in unique life situations and fi-
21 nancial pitfalls, including bankruptcy, foreclosure,
22 credit card misuse, and predatory lending;

23 “(3) include content that is appropriate to age
24 and socioeconomic levels;

1 “(4) develop programs based on educational
2 standards, definitions, and research;

3 “(5) include individual goals of financial inde-
4 pendence and stability;

5 “(6) establish professional development and de-
6 livery systems using evidence-based practices;

7 “(7) address the needs of one or more at-risk
8 populations;

9 “(8) incorporate sensitivities to specific cul-
10 tural, linguistic, or demographic characteristics;

11 “(9) enhance opportunities for asset building,
12 such as increasing savings for lower income house-
13 holds and investments into the stock, bond, and real
14 estate markets;

15 “(10) include an evaluation component to en-
16 sure the work’s effectiveness in increasing financial
17 literacy or consumer access to appropriate financial
18 products or services, or that the provider has evi-
19 dence of such effectiveness;

20 “(11) promise future replication or can be sus-
21 tained beyond the program period; and

22 “(12) will make effectiveness data (if any) that
23 is generated from the work available to others in the
24 financial education community.

1 “(d) APPLICATION AND EVALUATION STANDARDS
 2 AND PROCEDURES; DISTRIBUTION CRITERIA.—The Di-
 3 rector shall establish application and evaluation standards
 4 and procedures, distribution criteria, and such other
 5 forms, standards, definitions, and procedures as the Direc-
 6 tor determines to be appropriate.

7 “(e) CONTENT DELIVERY.—An eligible institution re-
 8 ceiving a grant under this section shall—

9 “(1) ensure that content is delivered in an ac-
 10 cessible way to young people, through traditional
 11 educational methods and digital methods, including
 12 over appropriate social media platforms; and

13 “(2) to the extent content is delivered through
 14 a website, ensure that the website is user friendly,
 15 visually appealing, and doesn’t bombard users with
 16 dense content that is difficult to comprehend.

17 “(f) GRANT AMOUNTS.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The aggregate amount of
 19 grants made under this section during any fiscal
 20 year—

21 “(A) shall be at least \$27,500,000; and

22 “(B) may not exceed \$55,000,000.

23 “(2) TERMINATION.—No grants may be made
 24 under this section after the end of fiscal year 2025.

1 “(g) REPORT TO CONGRESS.—The Director shall
2 issue an annual report to Congress containing—

3 “(1) a list of grant recipients under this sec-
4 tion, including the amount of such grant; and

5 “(2) for each grant recipient, a description of
6 the specific populations being served by such grant.

7 “(h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section the
8 following definitions shall apply:

9 “(1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
10 ble institution’ means a partnership of two or more
11 of the following:

12 “(A) An institution of higher education.

13 “(B) A State or local government agency
14 which specializes in financial education pro-
15 grams.

16 “(C) A nonprofit agency, organization, or
17 association.

18 “(D) A financial institution.

19 “(E) A small organization that is
20 partnering with, but is not itself, a person de-
21 scribed under subparagraph (A) through (D).

22 “(2) INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION.—
23 The term ‘institution of higher education’ has the
24 meaning given such term in section 101 of the High-
25 er Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1001(a)).”.

1 (b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of contents
2 under section 1(b) of the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform
3 and Consumer Protection Act is amended by striking the
4 item relating to section 1037 and inserting the following:

“Sec. 1037. Authorization for funding the establishment of centers of excellence
in financial literacy education.

“Sec. 1038. Effective date.”.

