

## 116TH CONGRESS 1ST SESSION H.R. 2465

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a program that enables college-bound residents of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to have greater choices among institutions of higher education, and for other purposes.

## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

May 1, 2019

Mr. Sablan (for himself and Mrs. Radewagen) 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 establish a program that enables college-bound residents of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to have greater choices among institutions of higher education, 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 "Northern Mariana Is-
- 5 lands and American Samoa College Access Act".

1	SEC. 2. NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS AND AMERICAN
2	SAMOA COLLEGE ACCESS.
3	Subpart 10 of part A of title IV of the Higher Edu-
4	cation Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070h) is amended to read
5	as follows:
6	"Subpart 10—Northern Mariana Islands and
7	American Samoa College Access
8	"SEC. 420R. PUBLIC SCHOOL GRANTS.
9	"(a) Purpose.—It is the purpose of this subpart to
10	establish a program that enables college-bound residents
11	of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to
12	have greater choices among institutions of higher edu-
13	cation.
14	"(b) Grants.—
15	"(1) In general.—From amounts appro-
16	priated under subsection (j), the Secretary shall pro-
17	vide—
18	"(A) 50 percent of such amount to the
19	Northern Mariana Islands for the Governor to
20	award grants to eligible institutions that enroll
21	eligible students to pay the difference between
22	the tuition and fees charged for in-State stu-
23	dents and the tuition and fees charged for out-
24	of-State students on behalf of each eligible stu-
25	dent enrolled in the eligible institution; and

1	"(B) 50 percent of such amount to the
2	American Samoa for the Governor to award
3	grants to eligible institutions that enroll eligible
4	students to pay the difference between the tui-
5	tion and fees charged for in-State students and
6	the tuition and fees charged for out-of-State
7	students on behalf of each eligible student en-
8	rolled in the eligible institution.
9	"(2) MAXIMUM STUDENT AMOUNTS.—The
10	amount paid on behalf of an eligible student under
11	this section shall be—
12	"(A) not more than \$15,000 for any one
13	award year (as defined in section 481); and
14	"(B) not more than \$45,000 in the aggre-
15	gate.
16	"(3) Proration.—The Governor shall prorate
17	payments under this section for students who attend
18	an eligible institution on less than a full-time basis.
19	"(c) Reduction for Insufficient Appropria-
20	TIONS.—
21	"(1) In general.—If the funds appropriated
22	pursuant to subsection (j) for any fiscal year are in-
23	sufficient to award a grant in the amount deter-
24	mined under subsection (a) on behalf of each eligible
25	student enrolled in an eligible institution, then the

1	Governor, in consultation with the Secretary of Edu-
2	cation, shall—
3	"(A) first, ratably reduce the amount of
4	the tuition and fee payment made on behalf of
5	each eligible student who has not received funds
6	under this section for a preceding year; and
7	"(B) after making reductions under sub-
8	paragraph (A), ratably reduce the amount of
9	the tuition and fee payments made on behalf of
10	all other eligible students.
11	"(2) Adjustments.—The Governor, in con-
12	sultation with the Secretary of Education, may ad-
13	just the amount of tuition and fee payments made
14	under paragraph (1) based on—
15	"(A) the financial need of the eligible stu-
16	dents to avoid undue hardship to the eligible
17	students; or
18	"(B) undue administrative burdens on the
19	Governor.
20	"(3) Further adjustments.—Notwithstand-
21	ing paragraphs (1) and (2), the Governor may
22	prioritize the making or amount of tuition and fee
23	payments under this subsection based on the income
24	and need of eligible students.
25	"(d) Definitions.—In this subpart:

1	"(1) Eligible institution.—The term 'eligi-
2	ble institution' means an institution that—
3	"(A) is a public four-year institution of
4	higher education located in one of the several
5	States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico,
6	the United States Virgin Islands, or Guam;
7	"(B) is eligible to participate in the stu-
8	dent financial assistance programs under title
9	IV; and
10	"(C) enters into an agreement with the
11	Governors of the Northern Mariana Islands and
12	American Samoa containing such conditions as
13	each Governor may specify, including a require-
14	ment that the institution use the funds made
15	available under this section to supplement and
16	not supplant assistance that otherwise would be
17	provided to eligible students from the Northern
18	Mariana Islands and American Samoa.
19	"(2) Eligible student.—The term 'eligible
20	student' means an individual who—
21	"(A) graduated from a public institution of
22	higher education located in the Northern Mar-
23	iana Islands or American Samoa;
24	"(B) begins the individual's course of
25	study within the 3 calendar years (excluding

any period of service on active duty in the
Armed Forces or service under the Peace Corps
Act (22 U.S.C. 2501 et seq.) or subtitle D of
title I of the National and Community Service
Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 12571 et seq.)) of graduation from a public institution of higher education located in the Northern Mariana Islands
or American Samoa;

- "(C) is enrolled or accepted for enrollment, on at least a half-time basis, in a baccalaureate degree or other program (including a program of study abroad approved for credit by the institution at which such student is enrolled) leading to a recognized educational credential at an eligible institution;
- "(D) if enrolled in an eligible institution, is maintaining satisfactory progress in the course of study the student is pursuing in accordance with section 484(c); and
- "(E) has not completed the individual's first undergraduate baccalaureate course of study.
- "(3) Institution of Higher Education.—
  The term 'institution of higher education' has the meaning given the term in section 101.

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1	"(4) GOVERNOR.—The term 'Governor' means
2	the Governor of the Commonwealth of the Northern
3	Mariana Islands or American Samoa.
4	"(e) Construction.—Nothing in this subpart shall
5	be construed to require an institution of higher education
6	to alter the institution's admissions policies or standards
7	in any manner to enable an eligible student to enroll in
8	the institution.
9	"(f) Applications.—Each student desiring a tuition
10	payment under this section shall submit an application to
11	the eligible institution at such time, in such manner, and
12	accompanied by such information as the eligible institution
13	may require.
14	"(g) Administration of Program.—
15	"(1) In general.—Each Governor shall carry
16	out the program under this section in consultation
17	with the Secretary. Each Governor may enter into a
18	grant, contract, or cooperative agreement with an-
19	other public or private entity to administer the pro-
20	gram under this section if the Governor determines
21	that doing so is a more efficient way of carrying out
22	the program.
23	"(2) Policies and procedures.—Each Gov-
24	ernor, in consultation with institutions of higher

education eligible for participation in the program

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1	authorized under this section, shall develop policies
2	and procedures for the administration of the pro-
3	gram.
4	"(3) Memorandum of Agreement.—Each
5	Governor and the Secretary shall enter into a Memo-
6	randum of Agreement that describes—
7	"(A) the manner in which the Governor
8	shall consult with the Secretary with respect to
9	administering the program under this section;
10	and
11	"(B) any technical or other assistance to
12	be provided to the Governor by the Secretary
13	for purposes of administering the program
14	under this section (which may include access to
15	the information in the common financial report-
16	ing form developed under section 483).
17	"(h) Governor's Report.—Each Governor shall re-
18	port to the authorizing committees annually regarding—
19	"(1) the number of eligible students attending
20	each eligible institution and the amount of the grant
21	awards paid to those institutions on behalf of the eli-
22	gible students;
23	"(2) the extent, if any, to which a ratable re-
24	duction was made in the amount of tuition and fee
25	payments made on behalf of eligible students; and

1	"(3) the progress in obtaining recognized aca-
2	demic credentials of the cohort of eligible students
3	for each year.
4	"(i) GAO Report.—Within 18 months of the date
5	of the enactment of this Act, the Comptroller General of
6	the United States shall report on the effect of the program
7	assisted under this section on educational opportunities
8	for eligible students. The Comptroller General shall ana-
9	lyze whether eligible students had difficulty gaining admis-
10	sion to eligible institutions because of any preference af-
11	forded in-State residents by eligible institutions, and shall
12	expeditiously report any findings regarding such difficulty
13	to Congress. In addition the Comptroller General shall—
14	"(1) analyze the extent to which there are an
15	insufficient number of eligible institutions to which
16	Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa stu-
17	dents can gain admission, including admission aided
18	by assistance provided under this subpart, due to—
19	"(A) caps on the number of out-of-State
20	students the institution will enroll;
21	"(B) significant barriers imposed by aca-
22	demic entrance requirements (such as grade
23	point average and standardized scholastic ad-
24	missions tests); and

1	"(C) absence of admission programs bene-
2	fitting minority students; and
3	"(2) report the findings of the analysis de-
4	scribed in paragraph (1) and the assessment de-
5	scribed in paragraph (2) to Congress and the Gov-
6	ernor.
7	"(j) Authorization of Appropriations.—There
8	are authorized to be appropriated to the Commonwealth
9	of the Northern Mariana Islands and American Samoa to
10	carry out this subpart \$5,000,000, to be available until
11	expended, for fiscal year 2020 and each of the 5 suc-
12	ceeding fiscal years.
13	"(k) Effective Date.—This subpart shall take ef-
14	fect with respect to payments for periods of instruction
15	that begin on or after the date of enactment of this Act.".

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