

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2028

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to authorize a program to recognize institutions of higher education that offer outstanding services and programs for foster and homeless youth, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MARCH 18, 2021

Mr. KILDEE (for himself, Mr. BACON, Ms. BASS, Ms. CASTOR of Florida, Mr. FITZPATRICK, Mr. GARBARINO, Mr. HASTINGS, Mr. KATKO, Mr. LANGEVIN, Mrs. LAWRENCE, Mr. LAWSON of Florida, Mr. LOWENTHAL, Mr. MELJER, Mr. POSEY, Mr. SAN NICOLAS, and Mr. SOTO) 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 authorize a program to recognize institutions of higher education that offer outstanding services and programs for foster and homeless youth, 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 “Fostering Postsec-
5 ondary Success for Foster and Homeless Youth Act of
6 2021”.

1 **SEC. 2. RECOGNITION OF FOSTER AND HOMELESS YOUTH**
2 **FRIENDLY INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDU-**
3 **CATION.**

4 Title VIII of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20
5 U.S.C. 1161a et seq.) is amended by adding at the end
6 the following new part:

7 **“PART BB—FOSTER AND HOMELESS YOUTH**
8 **FRIENDLY INSTITUTIONS**
9 **“SEC. 899. RECOGNITION OF FOSTER CARE YOUTH AND**
10 **HOMELESS YOUTH FRIENDLY INSTITUTIONS**
11 **OF HIGHER EDUCATION.**

12 “(a) GENERAL AUTHORITY.—The Secretary shall
13 recognize eligible institutions that offer outstanding sup-
14 port services and other programs tailored to the needs of
15 foster care youth and homeless youth.

16 “(b) DESIGNATION.—An eligible institution recog-
17 nized by the Secretary under subsection (a) shall be des-
18 ignated as ‘Foster and Homeless Youth Friendly’.

19 “(c) APPLICATION.—To be considered for recognition
20 under subsection (a), an eligible institution shall submit
21 to the Secretary an application at such time, in such man-
22 ner, and containing such information as the Secretary may
23 require. At a minimum, each application shall include a
24 detailed description of the programs and services for foster
25 care youth and homeless youth that are offered by the in-

1 stitution, which may include programs and services such
2 as—

3 “(1) mentorship programs that formally match
4 foster care youth and homeless youth with a peer or
5 adult mentor;

6 “(2) academic support services to supplement
7 or complement the classroom instruction provided to
8 foster care youth and homeless youth;

9 “(3) housing assistance programs under which
10 the institution provides—

11 “(A) on-campus or off-campus housing di-
12 rectly to foster care youth and homeless youth;
13 or

14 “(B) financial support to cover the housing
15 costs of foster care youth and homeless youth;

16 “(4) life and workforce skills development pro-
17 grams that teach or enhance the skills that foster
18 care youth and homeless youth may require to be
19 successful in their personal and professional lives;

20 “(5) financial aid or scholarships available ex-
21 clusively to foster care youth and homeless youth;

22 “(6) counseling or mental health services pro-
23 vided by a licensed professional with expertise in
24 serving foster care youth and homeless youth;

1 “(7) case management services and efforts to
2 facilitate participation in other Federal assistance
3 programs for which students may be eligible; and

4 “(8) such other programs and services as the
5 Secretary determines to be appropriate in consulta-
6 tion with the individuals and entities described in
7 subsection (e).

8 “(d) SELECTION PROCESS.—

9 “(1) GENERAL REQUIREMENTS.—

10 “(A) ANNUAL, MERIT-BASED SELEC-
11 TION.—On an annual basis, the Secretary shall
12 select eligible institutions for recognition under
13 subsection (a) from among institutions that
14 submit applications to the Secretary under sub-
15 section (c). The Secretary shall select such in-
16 stitutions on a competitive basis, based solely
17 on merit.

18 “(B) GEOGRAPHIC DIVERSITY NOT RE-
19 QUIRED.—The Secretary shall not consider geo-
20 graphic diversity among the States as a factor
21 in the selection of eligible institutions for rec-
22 ognition under subsection (a).

23 “(2) CRITERIA AND PROCEDURES.—Consistent
24 with paragraph (1), the Secretary shall issue guide-
25 lines setting forth criteria and procedures for the se-

lection of institutions for recognition under subsection (a). The guidelines shall be developed and implemented as follows:

“(A) DRAFT GUIDELINES.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this section, the Secretary shall issue draft guidelines, which shall be made available for public comment for a period of not less than 90 days.

“(B) REVISED GUIDELINES.—Not later than 90 days after the end of the public comment period specified in subparagraph (A), the Secretary shall issue revised guidelines, which shall be made available for public comment for a period of not less than 30 days.

“(C) FINAL GUIDELINES.—Not later than 30 days after the end of the public comment period specified in subparagraph (B), the Secretary shall publish and implement the final guidelines.

“(e) CONSULTATION.—In carrying out the program under this section, the Secretary shall consult with appropriate individuals and entities outside the Department of Education, which may include—

“(1) other Federal agencies;

“(2) State agencies;

1 “(3) institutions of higher education;
 2 “(4) nonprofit and advocacy organizations;
 3 “(5) current and former foster care youth; and
 4 “(6) students who have experienced homeless-
 5 ness.

6 “(f) INFORMATION SHARING.—On an annual basis,
 7 the Secretary shall publish, on a publicly accessible
 8 website of the Department of Education—

9 “(1) a profile of each institution recognized
 10 under subsection (a) in the most recent year; and

11 “(2) a comprehensive list of all institutions pre-
 12 viously recognized under subsection (a).

13 “(g) ENSURING CONTINUITY OF QUALITY PROGRAMS
 14 AND SERVICES FOR FOSTER AND HOMELESS YOUTH.—

15 “(1) INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW.—

16 “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not less frequently
 17 than once every five years, the Secretary shall
 18 review each institution recognized under sub-
 19 section (a) to determine whether the programs
 20 and services provided by the institution con-
 21 tinue to meet the criteria required for such rec-
 22 ognition.

23 “(B) NOTICE.—If the Secretary deter-
 24 mines under subparagraph (A) that an institu-
 25 tion no longer meets the criteria for recognition

1 under subsection (a), the Secretary shall trans-
2 mit written notice of such determination to the
3 institution.

4 “(C) REVOCATION.—After transmitting
5 the notice required under subparagraph (B),
6 the Secretary shall—

7 “(i) revoke the institution’s recogni-
8 tion under subsection (a); and

9 “(ii) remove the profile established for
10 the institution under subsection (f)(1)
11 from the website of the Department of
12 Education.

13 “(D) REAPPLICATION.—An institution
14 that loses recognition under subsection (a) may
15 reapply for such recognition in a subsequent ap-
16 plication year.

17 “(2) BRIEFING.—Not later than 3 years after
18 the date of enactment of this section, and not less
19 frequently than once every 2 years thereafter, the
20 Secretary shall provide to Congress a briefing that
21 identifies—

22 “(A) strategies used by institutions that
23 proved effective in meeting the needs of foster
24 care youth and homeless youth; and

1 “(B) recommendations on how to improve
2 programs and services for foster care youth and
3 homeless youth.

4 **“SEC. 899A. TRAINING, EVALUATION, AND INFORMATION**
5 **CENTER.**

6 “(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than two years after
7 the date of enactment of this section, the Secretary shall
8 establish a Center for Fostering Postsecondary Success
9 for Foster and Homeless Youth (referred to in this section
10 as the ‘Center’).

11 “(b) DUTIES.—The duties of the Center shall be to
12 assist institutions of higher education in establishing and
13 maintaining programs for foster care youth and homeless
14 youth, including by—

15 “(1) providing technical assistance;

16 “(2) collecting, evaluating, and delivering infor-
17 mation on best practices for such programs; and

18 “(3) maintaining resources to help foster care
19 youth and homeless youth navigate postsecondary
20 education.

21 “(c) COOPERATIVE AGREEMENT.—For the purpose
22 of carrying out this section, the Secretary may enter into
23 cooperative agreements with one or more organizations
24 with expertise in support services and other programs tai-

1 lored to the needs of foster care youth and homeless youth,
2 including—

3 “(1) nonprofit nongovernmental organizations;

4 “(2) Federal and State government agencies;

5 “(3) institutions of higher education, including
6 public, private, and land-grant colleges and univer-
7 sities; and

8 “(4) such other organizations as the Secretary
9 determines to be appropriate.

10 “(d) PRIORITY.—In entering into agreements with
11 organizations under subsection (c), the Secretary shall
12 give priority to organizations that—

13 “(1) are capable of engaging with foster care
14 youth and homeless youth and programs that serve
15 such youth and demonstrate expertise in under-
16 standing the unique needs of such youth;

17 “(2) demonstrate the capacity to effectively im-
18 plement outreach, training, and coordination func-
19 tions;

20 “(3) are capable of producing instructional ma-
21 terials that can easily be replicated and distributed
22 to institutions of higher education in multiple for-
23 mats;

24 “(4) have working partnerships with—

1 “(A) nonprofit and private sector organiza-
2 tions; and

3 “(B) local, State, and Tribal governments;

4 “(5) have the ability to work in underserved
5 communities; and

6 “(6) have an organizational mission aligned
7 with goals of the program under this part.

8 “(e) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this sec-
9 tion shall be construed to provide the Center with the au-
10 thority to issue mandates to, or impose requirements on,
11 any institution of higher education.

12 “(f) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS.—

13 “(1) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR ES-
14 TABLISHMENT.—Of the funds made available to
15 carry out this part for each of fiscal years 2021 and
16 2022, the Secretary may use not more than
17 \$2,000,000 in each fiscal year to establish the Cen-
18 ter.

19 “(2) LIMITATION ON USE OF FUNDS FOR OPER-
20 ATION.—Of the funds made available to carry out
21 this part for each fiscal year beginning after fiscal
22 year 2022, the Secretary may use not more than
23 \$1,000,000 in each fiscal year to support the oper-
24 ations of the Center.

1 **“SEC. 899B. DEFINITIONS.**

2 “In this part:

3 “(1) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION.—The term ‘eligi-
4 ble institution’ means—

5 “(A) an institution of higher education (as
6 defined in section 101); or

7 “(B) a postsecondary educational institu-
8 tion operated or controlled by the Bureau of In-
9 dian Education.

10 “(2) FOSTER CARE YOUTH.—The term ‘foster
11 care youth’ means an individual whose care and
12 placement is the responsibility of the State or Tribal
13 agency that administers a State or Tribal plan
14 under part B or E of title IV of the Social Security
15 Act (42 U.S.C. 621 et seq.; 670 et seq.), without re-
16 gard to whether foster care maintenance payments
17 are made under section 472 of such Act (42 U.S.C.
18 672) on behalf of the individual, including any such
19 individual who was in such care on or after attaining
20 13 years of age and without regard to the reason the
21 individual left such care.

22 “(3) HOMELESS YOUTH.—The term ‘homeless
23 youth’ has the meaning given the term ‘homeless
24 children and youths’ in section 725 of the McKin-

1 ney-Vento Homeless Assistance Act (42 U.S.C.
2 11434a).”.

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