

THE VOTE ON THE PREVIOUS QUESTION: WHAT IT REALLY MEANS

This vote, the vote on whether to order the previous question on a special rule, is not merely a procedural vote. A vote against ordering the previous question is a vote against the Democratic majority agenda and a vote to allow the opposition, at least for the moment, to offer an alternative plan. It is a vote about what the House should be debating.

Mr. Clarence Cannon's Precedents of the House of Representatives, (VI, 308-311) describes the vote on the previous question on the rule as "a motion to direct or control the consideration of the subject before the House being made by the Member in charge." To defeat the previous question is to give the opposition a chance to decide the subject before the House. Cannon cites the Speaker's ruling of January 13, 1920, to the effect that "the refusal of the House to sustain the demand for the previous question passes the control of the resolution to the opposition" in order to offer an amendment. On March 15, 1909, a member of the majority party offered a rule resolution. The House defeated the previous question and a member of the opposition rose to a parliamentary inquiry, asking who was entitled to recognition. Speaker Joseph G. Cannon (R-Illinois) said: "The previous question having been refused, the gentleman from New York, Mr. Fitzgerald, who had asked the gentleman to yield to him for an amendment, is entitled to the first recognition."

Because the vote today may look bad for the Democratic majority they will say "the vote on the previous question is simply a vote on whether to proceed to an immediate vote on adopting the resolution ... [and] has no substantive legislative or policy implications whatsoever." But that is not what they have always said. Listen to the definition of the previous question used in the Floor Procedures Manual published by the Rules Committee in the 109th Congress, (page 56). Here's how the Rules Committee described the rule using information from Congressional Quarterly's "American Congressional Dictionary": "If the previous question is defeated, control of debate shifts to the leading opposition member (usually the minority Floor Manager) who then manages an hour of debate and may offer a germane amendment to the pending business."

Deschler's Procedure in the U.S. House of Representatives, the subchapter titled "Amending Special Rules" states: "a refusal to order the previous question on such a rule [a special rule reported from the Committee on Rules] opens the resolution to amendment and further debate." (Chapter 21, section 21.2) Section 21.3 continues: Upon rejection of the motion for the previous question on a resolution reported from the Committee on Rules, control shifts to the Member leading the opposition to the previous question, who may offer a proper amendment or motion and who controls the time for debate thereon."

Clearly, the vote on the previous question on a rule does have substantive policy implications. It is one of the only available tools for those who oppose the Democratic majority's agenda and allows those with alternative views the opportunity to offer an alternative plan.

Ms. CASTOR. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, and I move the previous question on the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on ordering the previous question.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 3370. An act to resolve pending claims against Libya by United States nationals, and for other purposes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I request 5 legislative days for Members to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 4137.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 4137, HIGHER EDUCATION OPPORTUNITY ACT

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 1389, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 4137) to amend and extend the Higher Education Act of 1965, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 1389, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of July 30, 2008, at page 17093.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) and the gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER).

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the conference report on H.R. 4137, which strengthens and reauthorizes the Higher Education Act. In America, a college degree has always been the ticket to middle class. More and more, our future depends upon our ability to produce well-educated and skilled workers to take the jobs of the 21st century.

Over the past 2 years, this Congress has built a strong record of working in

a bipartisan way to make college more affordable and accessible. Last year we enacted the College Cost Reduction and Access Act, which provides for the single largest increase in Federal student aid since the GI Bill.

But we also know that there is still work to do to ensure that the doors of college are truly open to all qualified students who want to attend. The last time the Higher Education Act was authorized was 1998. In those 10 years that have passed, our world and our country have changed, and so have the needs of college-going students.

Today's students face a number of challenges on their path to college, from skyrocketing college tuition prices, to needlessly complicated student aid and application processes, to the predatory tactics of student lenders. This conference report will remove these obstacles and reshape our higher education programs in the best interests of students and families.

To address soaring costs, this legislation will increase the transparency and the accountability of the tuition pricing system, shining a bright light on the prices set by colleges and universities. It requires the Department of Education to create new, user friendly Web sites with helpful information on college prices and the factors that are driving these tuition increases. Colleges with the largest increases in tuition will be required to report their reasons for raising those prices.

This bill will also ensure that States hold up their end of the bargain in funding higher education by establishing for the first time a maintenance-of-effort requirement on the States that receive Federal funds through the student loan program. This means while we are putting in money from the top from the Federal Government, the States will hopefully stop taking that money out of the bottom and leaving families and students who are borrowing loans to go to college no better off than they were before these actions. This is a dramatic change from the patterns of the past.

To better protect students while navigating the often murky world of college loans, this bill restores trust and accountability to the student loan programs by cleaning up the conflicts of interest between the lenders and the colleges. All Federal and private student lenders will be required to provide full and fair disclosure about the terms and conditions of the loans they offer. And to help borrowers' reliance on more expensive private loans, we will help ensure that students and families first exhaust the less expensive Federal loan and aid options before turning to private loans.

It will also help students manage their textbook costs. It provides students and faculties with complete pricing information before each semester so they can shop around for the most

affordable deals. For the first time, textbook publishers will be required to offer less expensive versions of each expensive bundled textbook they sell.

This bicameral compromise also simplifies the Federal student aid application process and provides families with early estimates of their expected financial aid packages to help them better plan for their expenses a year ahead of the time.

In addition, H.R. 4137 will make Pell Grant scholarships available year-round for the first time.

It strengthens the TRIO and the GEAR UP college readiness and support programs that are critical to helping so many students stay in school and graduate.

It expands funding for graduate programs at historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and predominantly Black institutions.

It increases college aid and support programs for veterans and military families.

It ensures equal college opportunities and fair learning environments for students with disabilities.

It makes colleges safer for the entire campus community.

It encourages colleges and universities to adopt energy efficient and sustainable practices on their campuses.

I am confident that this legislation will improve the higher education system and make it more affordable, fairer and easier to navigate for students and families. Almost all of these students are borrowing money. Time is money, and time is effort, and we need to make this process more streamlined, fairer to families and fairer to students.

None of this, I want to say, would be possible without the leadership and the passion and the determination of Senator TED KENNEDY, and I would like to thank him for that.

□ 1315

Also, Senator ENZI and Senator MIKULSKI. Senator MIKULSKI stepped in when Senator KENNEDY became ill and did a magnificent job of shepherding this bill and this conference report through the Senate.

I would also like to thank all the members of our committee for their hard work. And I would especially like to recognize Congressmen BUCK MCKEON, RUBÉN HINOJOSA, and RIC KELLER, and their staffs including Amy Raaf Jones, Moira Lenahan, and Ricardo Martinez.

And, finally, I would like to thank my staff for their tireless efforts on this reauthorization, including Mark Zuckerman, Alex Nock, Denise Forte, Stephanie Moore, Gaby Gomez, Julie Radocchia, Jeff Appel, Sharon Lewis, Margaret Young, Fred Jones, and Arman Rezaee.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the Higher Education Opportunity Act, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it took us 5 long years to get here today on the cusp of the first comprehensive renewal of Federal higher education programs in a decade. I am here to tell you that sometimes what we say is true; good things do come to those who wait.

I want to begin by thanking Chairman MILLER, chairman of the full committee, and Representatives HINOJOSA and KELLER, the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee, for their strong efforts on this product that we have here today.

The four of us have worked as equal partners in this endeavor, not always agreeing, but never losing sight of our shared commitment to making higher education in this country more accessible, affordable, and accountable. Representative CASTLE has also been a close partner of mine in the effort to reign in college costs, and I want to recognize him for his commitment.

Of course, the House did not do this alone. Senator KENNEDY and Senator ENZI have worked equally hard, and I want to thank them and recognize them for their efforts. Although Senator KENNEDY was not able to be here in Washington for our final conference meeting yesterday, he has had a profound impact on the legislation, and he remains in our thoughts. Senator MIKULSKI filled in for him and did a yeoman's job and we want to thank her for her efforts.

We know how important higher education is, both to individuals and to our Nation. A college degree can be a ticket to the middle class. It helps individuals prepare for good jobs, and allows them to pursue new skills in a changing economy. Higher education also has important societal benefits. College education citizens are healthier, more civically-minded, have lower unemployment rates, and use fewer government benefits. An educated citizenry is also vital to maintaining our competitive edge in a changing world.

Because higher education is so important, we have made it a priority to ensure all Americans have access to a quality, affordable college education. In addition to making close to \$100 billion in financial aid available to students, the Federal Government also spends billions of dollars each year on aid to institutions, support for college access programs, investments in research and development, and many other avenues that support higher education.

Despite the considerable Federal investment, or perhaps, in part, because of it, colleges and universities have increased tuition and fees year in and year out. The increases have come in good economic times and in bad,

whether enrollments are surging or holding steady. It seems the only thing consistent about college costs is that they are going up, and going up rapidly.

With this bill, we hope to change that. Our principles for reform are based on the idea that by giving good information to consumers, we can empower them to exert influence on the marketplace. Through the power of sunshine and transparency, we are lifting the veil on college costs and holding institutions of higher learning accountable for their role in the cost equation.

Those principles of sunshine and transparency are hallmarks of this bill, and not just in the area of college costs. We are also letting the sun shine in on college operations and quality through enhanced institutional disclosure and a more transparent accreditation process. There are numerous positive reforms in this bill, too many even for me to name.

Of course, it is not a perfect bill. No bill is. I am particularly concerned about the number of new programs created in the conference report. Rather than trying to micromanage from Washington by creating a brandnew program for every possible contingency, we should focus on less red tape and greater local flexibility.

However, on the whole, this bill is an achievement of persistence and commitment. It updates programs to meet the needs of students in the 21st century. It recognizes the value of for-profit institutions of higher education. It promotes distance education, a mode of delivery that becomes more important every day as gas prices force students to limit their commuting to and from school. And, it uses the power of sunshine and transparency to transform all aspects of our higher education system. Above all else, this bill offers real solutions to the college cost crisis.

I thank Members on both sides of the aisle for their commitment to this cause.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA), the Subcommittee on Higher Education Chair, who has done a magnificent job in shepherding this bill to the floor.

Mr. HINOJOSA. I thank the gentleman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the conference report for HR 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

We are near the end of our long journey to reauthorize the Higher Education Act. I would like to personally thank all of the members of the conference committee, especially our leaders, Chairman TED KENNEDY, Chairwoman MIKULSKI, Senator ENZI, Chairman GEORGE MILLER, Representative BUCK MCKEON, and Representative RIC

KELLER, for their commitment to producing a bipartisan, forward-looking bill that will update our existing higher education programs and address emerging needs.

I thank all the committee staff members in both the majority and minority who worked with great commitment to getting the job done. They had a mindset that told me that they didn't know it couldn't be done, "and that is why we did it."

In the Higher Education Opportunity Act, we are taking significant steps to improve our student aid delivery system, ensure the integrity of our student loan programs, and provide students and families with the tools that they need to make informed choices about which college to attend and how to finance it. These are complex issues, and on a bipartisan, bicameral basis we have come together to offer some practical solutions. We couldn't have done it if we had not worked together.

I am particularly proud of the provisions that will help our veterans and active duty military have full access to the education benefits that are due to them. The provision to establish veterans' centers and veteran student support teams on college campuses will help our veterans get the full benefit of the GI bill expansion that we just enacted.

Finally, I would like to highlight the great progress we have made in strengthening minority serving institutions. After 10 years of waiting, Hispanic serving institutions will have support for graduate programs leading to masters and doctoral degrees. We are addressing the urgent needs for teachers and college faculty with an emphasis on building the capacity of minority serving institutions to meet this need. We will leverage minority serving institutions to engage more youth in science and technology. The Higher Education Opportunity Act represents real progress for our communities.

In closing, I would like to thank all of my colleagues for helping us reach this point. I hope we can get this legislation, which measures over one foot, with over 1,100 pages, to the President's desk as soon as possible.

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This has been an enormous undertaking. The last reauthorization of the Higher Education act took place during my first term in Congress over 10 years ago.

We began this Congress with a series of hearings focused on the steps we needed to take to improve access and affordability in higher education and to position our Nation and our students too at the leading edge of the global economy. We asked the higher education community and all of our members to come forward with new ideas. This bill reflects the creativity and innovation that makes a U.S. college education sought after in all parts of the world.

Last fall, we enacted into law the largest increase in Federal student aid since the GI bill with the College Cost Reduction Act.

In the Higher Education Opportunity Act, we are taking significant steps to improve our student aid delivery system, ensure the integrity of our student loan programs, and provide students and families with the tools that they need to make informed choices about which college to attend and how to finance it. These are complex issues, and on a bipartisan, bicameral basis we have come together to offer some practical solutions.

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Finally, I would like to highlight the great progress we have made in strengthening minority-serving institutions. With over 40 percent of our public school children being racial or ethnic minorities and nearly half of all minority students attending minority-serving institutions, we are taking some very important steps in this legislation to build our capacity in this critical area. After 10 years of waiting, Hispanic-Serving Institutions will have support for graduate programs. We built on the foundation that we established in the College Cost Reduction and Access Act for Asian and Pacific Islander-serving institutions, predominantly Black Colleges and Universities, tribally-controlled colleges and universities, and Historically Black Colleges and Universities. We are addressing the urgent need for teachers and college faculty with an emphasis on building the capacity of minority-serving institutions to meet this need. We will leverage minority-serving institutions to engage more youth in the sciences and technology. The Higher Education Opportunity Act represents real progress for our communities.

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Mr. MCKEON. I yield now to the subcommittee ranking member, the gentleman from Florida, Mr. RIC KELLER, 4 minutes.

Mr. KELLER of Florida. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member on the House Higher Education Subcommittee and a member of the conference committee, I rise today in strong support of the bipartisan Higher Education Opportunity Act, which is the first reauthorization of the Higher Education Act in 10 years.

I support this legislation for three reasons.

First, it allows year-round Pell Grants for students who wish to complete their education more quickly.

Second, it reduces the burdensome red tape on students and families by providing a much shorter, simpler application for Federal student financial aid.

And, third, it includes my legislation to curb wasteful spending by closing a loophole that had allowed convicted child predators to receive Federal financial aid to take college courses. I am going to limit my remarks today to the wasteful spending issue.

It is a national embarrassment that we are wasting taxpayer dollars for child molesters and rapists to take college courses, while hard-working young people from lower and middle income families are flipping hamburgers to pay for college.

I have been working to close this loophole for years, and today, the most insane, wasteful spending program in America comes to an end. This legislation ensures that taxpayer money for Pell Grants will go to low and middle income students, not dangerous sexual predators. Let me give you a real-life example.

James Sturtz is one of the most violent sexual predators in America and he is currently locked up in a Wisconsin facility. He was convicted and sent to prison for raping a 4-year-old girl. After being released from prison, he raped a woman at knife-point and was sent to prison a second time. After being released, he met a college student waiting for a bus, persuaded her to get in his car, and then raped her at knife-point. He was then sent back to prison for a third time; and after his sentence ended in 2006 he was locked up in a civil confinement center, to be held there indefinitely.

Sturtz and several other locked-up sexual predators decided to exploit this civil confinement loophole and obtained thousands of dollars in Federal Pell Grants to take college courses like algebra through the mail. Then, Sturtz and two-thirds of the other inmates dropped their classes and used our taxpayer money to buy blue jeans, music CDs, movie DVDs, radios, television sets, and DVD players. Of course, even if they hadn't dropped their classes, there is zero evidence that violent sexual predators who take algebra and calculus classes have lower recidivism rates.

How did this loophole happen in the first place? Prison inmates have been ineligible for Pell Grants since 1994. In 20 States, including Florida and Wisconsin, they wisely hold the most violent repeated sexual predators indefinitely in civil confinement centers, after they have served their regular prison sentence, because they are likely to repeat their crimes if released back into society.

For example, in my home State of Florida, 54 violent sexual predators obtained over \$200,000 in Pell Grants at taxpayer expense in 1 year alone. Similar expenditures in the other 20 States with civil confinement means millions of dollars being wasted. Until now.

This was a team effort. I would like to especially thank Ranking Member BUCK MCKEON, Chairman GEORGE MILLER, as well as the other members of the conference committee and our entire hard-working professional staff members for working in a bipartisan spirit to include this provision and so many other worthy provisions in this legislation.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to reauthorize the Higher Education Act and vote "yes" on H.R. 4137.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. SHAYS) for a unanimous consent request.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the conference report to H.R. 4137, the College Access and Affordability Act.

Higher education is not a luxury. It is a public good.

Today, we have an opportunity to expand college access, increase student aid, and make institutions and lenders more accountable to the students they serve.

I believe quality education is the foundation of our nation's ability to compete in a global economy.

Unfortunately, the skyrocketing cost of college has created a significant barrier for many students. It is unacceptable that in 2005, the price of college was equal to 71.3 percent of household income for the bottom fifth of the population.

I am especially pleased H.R. 4137 will incrementally increase the maximum Pell award for students to \$8,000 in 2014.

Two-thirds of four-year undergraduate students graduate with debt, and the average student loan debt among graduating seniors is \$19,237.

I am also grateful this conference report includes an amendment offered by Representative JIM MORAN and myself, to study how student debt levels impact a graduate's decision to enter into a public service career.

In the next ten years, 90 percent of our nation's federal executives will be over the age of 50 and nearing retirement.

The study will include: an assessment of current recruiting and retaining challenges; an evaluation of existing federal programs and whether additional programs could increase recruitment rates; recommendations for pilot programs that would increase recruitment rates.

The time to recognize and encourage an increased commitment to public service is now. According to the Higher Education Research Institute, two-thirds of the 2005 freshman class at institutions of higher education expressed a desire to serve others, the highest rate in a generation. Furthermore, applications to Teach for America and City Year have increased,

and religious missions involving young Americans have increased dramatically.

Congressman MORAN and I have also introduced the Public Service Academy Act, modeled after our existing military academies, to create the first national civilian institution of higher education in the United States. The public service academy would provide students a competitive, federally subsidized, public service-driven undergraduate education. In return for a 4-year liberal arts education, students would be required to serve our country for 5 years in the public sector after graduation.

The Public Service Academy would strengthen and protect the United States by creating a corps of well-trained, highly-qualified civilian leaders willing to devote themselves to leadership through patriotic public service.

It is alarming to think, in this period of economic uncertainty, we would be willing to provide anything less than the highest quality education to citizens of our Nation.

Access to higher education is critical to maintaining our global competitiveness.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I represent 100,000 college students and eight colleges and universities in the San Diego region, and obviously I am very interested in the provisions in the conference report for College Opportunity and Affordability Act. And I am proud of this agreement for many of the reasons that have been given, but I am proud of it for these reasons also:

It makes servicemembers eligible for more financial aid. It stops student loan interest from piling up when servicemembers are off serving our country. And, it guarantees our men and women in uniform will not use their academic standing when they return. And, also, because it allows students to receive work study payments when they are prevented from working by natural disasters such as we had with the wildfires in the San Diego region.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member MCKEON, Chairman KENNEDY, and Ranking Member ENZI for their hard work. I urge the adoption of this conference report.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I would just like to thank the gentlewoman for all of her work on behalf of military families, making sure that they did not pay an additional price for being in the military and lose their eligibility, for her work on that amendment.

Mr. MCKEON. I yield now to the gentleman from Wisconsin, our senior member on the committee, Mr. PETRI, 2 minutes.

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Mr. PETRI. I am happy to support the provisions in this conference report that put in place a number of reforms that will improve access to higher edu-

cation, increase transparency in college costs, and provide more accountability in the Federal student loan programs.

One of my top priorities over the years has been to ensure students access to Federal aid and to provide greater budget responsibility to taxpayers with regard to the management of Federal student aid funds. This legislation incorporates several provisions aimed at protecting students' financial interests.

Furthermore, I strongly support the sunshine measures that will provide greater transparency about relationships between lenders and schools. I am pleased that the conference report also retains the language that I offered to provide greater fiscal accountability at the Department of Education by requiring a Department of Justice review of any settlement with lenders that exceeds \$1 million.

The conference report also contains a critical first step toward the implementation of my Income-Dependent Education Assistance Act which would create a new direct consolidated loan for student borrowers that would be pegged to their income after graduation and collected by the IRS.

It also includes several provisions that Representative GRIJALVA and I first proposed in the House that would establish a strong national effort to improve the accessibility of instructional materials for postsecondary students with visual impairments and other print disabilities.

Though there is that much is positive in this conference report, I am disappointed that we failed to adequately address the problems that currently exist in the accreditation system. For many years I have argued that accreditation fails to protect the public interest because it is costly and intrusive and does not ensure educational quality. I believe the reforms included in this bill will do little to improve the system and may, in fact, have made it even worse.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues for working so hard over the years to reauthorize these important higher education programs. I support today's conference report and look forward to making further improvements in the future.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Connecticut (Mr. COURTNEY) who has been so helpful on this legislation, both in teacher education and in community service and the work study programs.

Mr. COURTNEY. Mr. Speaker, from 2001 to 2006, the cost of higher education exploded in this country. It went up 40 percent, destroying the dreams of too many young people and damaging our economy. During that time period, the Congress turned a deaf ear to that issue. The Pell Grant program had been basically frozen, and the

interest rates for the Stafford Student Loan Program incredibly was increased.

Last year, under Mr. MILLER's leadership, we passed the College Cost Reduction Act which addressed those two problems. This year we are finally addressing a piece of legislation that was 5 years overdue, the Higher Education Reauthorization Act which, as the prior speakers have said, will do many good things in terms of holding colleges and universities accountable for high costs, and also cleaning up unethical lending practices which had cropped up, and many students, so desperate to find access to money, fell victim to.

I urge support for this conference report which, again, has been long overdue for 5 years, and applaud the leadership of Mr. MILLER, Mr. KENNEDY and Mr. HINOJOSA in leading the Congress in a new direction.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield now to the gentlelady from Washington, a member of the committee, CATHY MCMORRIS RODGERS, 5 minutes.

Mrs. MCMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, as someone who is still paying off some student loans, I understand how difficult it is for parents and students as they face dramatic increases in college costs. And as the first in my family to the graduate from college, I know firsthand the value and the importance of a good education. It truly is the doorway to success, and is a critical piece to making America more competitive in the global economy.

I am pleased how this bill does aim to improve America's competitiveness. It seeks to make college more affordable, and it cracks down on the fraudulent practice of "diploma mills" where people manufacture fake diplomas.

Since being elected to Congress I have worked to improve America's competitiveness, and I believe it is important that we are focusing more on math and science education. And through the Mathematics and Science Scholars Program, this legislation will refocus the program to award graduate and postgraduate scholarships to U.S. students studying math, science, engineering or computer science.

In addition, this bill incorporates an adjunct content specialist program, which I think is very important to bringing the real world experience into the classroom, and it provides grants to school districts to recruit adjunct content specialists, these experts in math, science and critical foreign languages.

I believe our education can be improved if we allow smart and successful people like Bill Gates to spend time in the classroom. Wouldn't it be great to have someone like Bill Gates in the classroom helping inspire our high school students?

However, we are not simply seeing a shortage of engineers and scientists. We also need welders, plumbers, auto mechanics, lab technicians, doctors, nurses, pharmacy techs.

In my eastern Washington district, manufacturers turn away job applicants because prospective employees don't have the math skills needed for precision manufacturing. These are good paying jobs, on average, \$42,000 a year. And most of them come with good medical and retirement benefits.

Along with increasing our competitiveness, the rising cost of college must be addressed. We must increase support for loan and grant programs that give students additional options and opportunities for post-high school education. College tuition continues to dramatically increase, clearly impacting students' ability to afford college.

Each year, approximately \$9 million is disbursed to students in Eastern Washington colleges and universities through the Perkins Loan program, and I am pleased that the bill we are considering today increases funding for Perkins loan programs.

I am also pleased that this bill opens wider the door for students with intellectual disabilities. For the first time, these students will be eligible for Pell Grants, Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants and the Federal Work Study Program.

Today businesses are increasing more opportunities to employ people with intellectual disabilities to become employed so that these employees can earn higher wages, allowing them to realize their dreams and become self-sufficient.

The conference report builds on the successful delivery of educational services to these students made possible through the Individuals With Disabilities Education Act.

Finally, I am pleased we are working to eradicate the practice of diploma mills. Provisions in this bill increase transparency to give consumers more information and require the Secretary to continue her efforts to further crack down on fraudulent diploma mills.

In Spokane, purchasers of these phony degrees from a local diploma mill included at least 135 Federal Government employees. We need to protect the integrity of our higher education system and the diplomas so many of us have worked hard to earn.

I thank the chairman and the ranking member for their efforts on this important bill. We must do all we can to prepare our kids for the opportunities life presents. If we equip them with a solid education and the workforce skills, America will continue to lead in innovation and excellence.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS), who has been so helpful on this legislation with respect to Historically Black Colleges and Universities and the TRIO program.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I support the passage of the conference report.

I commend full Committee Chairman MILLER, Subcommittee Chairman HINOJOSA, Ranking Members MCKEON and KELLER for their leadership on this bill. I extend my deepest thanks to the chairman for his commitment to enhancing minority education and for his steadfast support on multiple issues that were especially important to me and to institutions serving the black community.

I would be remiss if I did not thank the Education and Labor staff, who so skillfully worked to establish the many wonderful programs that will improve higher education for so many.

There are multiple provisions of this bill that will benefit Chicago and other places throughout the country. I am especially pleased that the bill strengthens minority-serving institutions, especially HBCUs and Predominantly Black Institutions, or PBIs. I am very glad that the bill strengthens the TRIO programs that serve first-generation low-income students, and the prohibition on the Department of Education's Absolute Priority within the Upward Bound program.

At this time I would like to engage in a colloquy with Chairman MILLER.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. If the gentleman would yield, I would be happy to engage in a colloquy with the gentleman from Illinois about section 725.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I yield.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I concur completely with the gentleman's understanding. The conferees intend that this reauthorization is to strengthen the ability of both the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Predominantly Black Institutions to develop masters professionals. For this reason, the conferees intend that any appropriated funds be divided proportionately between the sections 723 and 724.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. I thank the chairman of the committee for his clarification and appreciate his and the conferees commitment to writing the statute to promote unity among the higher education community that serves mostly African American students.

It is an excellent bill. I urge its passage.

Mr. Speaker, it is with great pleasure that I support the passage of the conference report for H.R. 4137, which authorizes the Higher Education Opportunity Act. This bill reauthorizes the higher education act for the first time in 10 years. I commend full-Committee Chairman GEORGE MILLER and sub-Committee Chairman RUBÉN HINOJOSA for their leadership on this bill. I extend my deepest thanks to the Chairman for his commitment to enhancing minority education and for his steadfast support on multiple issues that were especially important to me and to institutions serving the

Black community. I would be remiss if I did not thank the Education and Labor staff who so skillfully advocated to establish so many wonderful programs that will improve higher education opportunities for so many.

There are multiple provisions of this bill that will benefit Chicago and Illinois. To begin, this bill greatly expands access to higher education for low-income and minority students. By increasing Pell grants to \$8,000, extending the grants to year-round, and allowing part-time students to qualify for Pell grants, this bill will enable many more of my constituents to attend college.

I am especially pleased that the bill authorizes programs for both undergraduate and masters programs at Predominantly Black Institutions. PBIs represent a growing cadre of four-year and two-year institutions that serve as the access point for a growing number of urban and rural Black students whose family and financial situations limit their ability to gain access to college in many states. Many of these students come from low-income families and are also "first generation" college students, whose educational preparation for college and family finances present special challenges to educational success. PBIs are not eligible to receive funding under the HBCU capacity-building funds given that PBIs were not established prior to 1964. The undergraduate PBI program will provide federal support to strengthen the institutional capacity of schools to attract, retain, and graduate their students. Chicago has many PBIs that provide high quality education for many low-income, minority students, including: Chicago State University, Malcolm X College, Harold Washington College, Olive-Harvey College, Kennedy King College, East-West University, Robert Morris College, and South Suburban College. In addition, the new PBI masters program promotes the development of more Black masters-level professionals in the science and health fields by providing specific institutional support. For example, Chicago State University will qualify for valuable aid to strengthen its masters programs in the biological sciences and computer science as well as strengthen its first professional program in pharmaceutical science. Together, these new PBI programs will enhance the access for low-income African American students to higher education.

I also am pleased that the bill strengthens both HBCU undergraduate and graduate education. As a graduate of an HBCU, I am very familiar with the benefits these institutions provide to low-income students. The new masters program for HBCUs in Title VII fills a void in current law. Title III, Part B includes institutional support for undergraduate education at HBCUs, and Section 326 provides institutional support for doctoral and first professional programs at HBCUs. The new Section 723 completes this continuum by supporting HBCUs with masters programs in the fields of science and health as well as clarifies the congressional intent that the existing Section 326 pertains to doctoral and first professional programs.

Further, the bill strengthens the TRIO programs, which are key supports for low-income, first-generation college students to prepare and succeed in higher education. Importantly, the bill institutes an appeals process when ap-

plicants have evidence of errors in the handling or scoring of the applications. A number of Chicago institutions unfortunately have had difficulties in the last few years with denial of applications for suspect reasons and due to glitches with the Grants.gov system. Having a procedure in place to allow due process for these applicants is an important element to ensuring a fair application process. Further, the bill prohibits the implementation of the absolute priority that the Department imposed on the Upward Bound program, forcing programs to dramatically alter the nature of the services provided. I am happy that any future evaluations of Upward Bound will exclude the cohorts of students chosen under this well-intentioned but ill-conceived priority.

Chicago also has many for-profit institutions of higher education that serve an important role in educating students. I am glad that the Conference Report provides additional flexibility for these institutions in terms of the 90/10 rule, including flexibility in the types of revenue that count toward the 10 percent, the Departmental response to violations of the rule, and exceeding loan limits as a result of the enactment of the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act. Further, I support the increased monitoring and reporting requirements of for-profit institutions as a means to provide transparency and safeguards for students.

I am happy that the bill emphasizes the need to support populations that are underrepresented in higher education. One such population about which I am particularly concerned is African American men. The under-representation of minority males, especially African American men, is a matter of public record that is reinforced by high drop-out rates in urban and rural school districts, and lower participation/enrollment rates of these groups in colleges and universities. The American Council on Education's Minorities in Higher Education Annual Reports have consistently documented these factors for almost two decades. For example, although the enrollment of black men in higher education increased between 2000 to 2001, less than 3 percent of black men received a combination of associate's, bachelor's, or master's degrees. Clearly, ensuring success of students in higher education necessitates examining and promoting the success of minority males. To this end, the Conference Report includes a study of minority male access to and success in higher education that will provide key data to lawmakers so that we can better tailor our policies to promote minority men in higher education. The bill also encourages the involvement of individuals—such as African American men—who are from populations underrepresented in higher education in the TRIO programs, in teacher residency programs, in teacher preparation courses at minority serving institutions, and in loan forgiveness programs. These provisions will help ensure that the higher education community better reflects the diversity of our Nation.

Another population about which I am particularly concerned is individuals in prison. After Congress barred prisoners from receiving Pell grants in 1994, provision of postsecondary correctional education dropped greatly. Multiple empirical studies demonstrate that

postsecondary correctional education improves the atmosphere in prisons, increases successful reentry, increases employment after release, and decreases criminal behavior. For example, studies show that such education helps improve communication among staff and inmates, develop positive peer role models, and reduce disciplinary infractions. Further, multiple studies show that postsecondary education saves taxpayers' money. In 2001, government analysts in Maryland calculated that such programs saved state taxpayers more than \$24 million annually, more than two times what the state spent on such programs. Given that the average annual cost of incarceration is more than \$22,000 per prisoner and that more than half of formerly-incarcerated people return to prison with 3 years, providing higher education within prisons promises to be a cost-effective investment of taxpayer dollars.

Currently, only approximately 5 percent of the total prison population is enrolled in postsecondary education. Current Federal postsecondary correctional grants target youth, resulting in a great need for such programs for adults. The Conference report expands higher education opportunities for older students by extending the qualifying age for such programs to 35 and by allowing up to 7 years to study while in prison. These provisions will allow greater flexibility to states to identify and serve individual inmates who are best able to benefit from postsecondary correctional education. In addition, the bill authorizes a study on the effectiveness of postsecondary correctional education. This study will greatly advance our understanding of what makes programs effective in educating individuals and reducing post release offending.

Further, I am pleased that the bill takes steps to ease the discrimination against low-income students with drug convictions. There are multiple problems with a one-size-fits-all penalty based on financial aid. It inappropriately uses the financial aid application process to apply a mandatory minimum sentence above and beyond what the judicial system has imposed for a restricted group of students. Also, given that the penalty applies only to students receiving Federal aid who must maintain a C average or higher, the current provision unfairly denies aid only to low-income, high-performing students. The Conference report makes it easier for students who lose aid to re-qualify for Federal aid after it is removed. The report also requires an important study of who is denied Federal aid so that lawmakers can better understand whether this policy penalizes particular categories of students compared to others. As the Committee on Education and Labor's Report indicated, the study will examine the demographic background of the students excluded from Federal aid by the drug prohibition as well as the nature of the offenses underlying the exclusion. The variables for study are clearly enumerated in the Committee Report.

In closing, there are many elements of this Conference report that will help many low-income students to access and succeed in higher education. I am proud to serve in the Congress that is making such a considerable investment in our students so that all youth—especially low-income, minority students—have access to quality postsecondary education.

Mr. MCKEON. I am happy to yield now to the gentleman from Delaware (Mr. CASTLE), subcommittee ranking member on the committee and champion of reducing college costs, 2 minutes.

Mr. CASTLE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding. I will see what I can do about college costs in 2 minutes.

I thank both the gentlemen from California for their tremendous work on this legislation. I will submit a statement for the RECORD.

I am one who watched college costs go up even in the time I have been in Congress at a rate that is higher than anything else in the country, maybe not gasoline in the last year or two, but health care and all the other things that we worry about so much.

And we have heard many Members come to the floor and speak about the need to educate our children. I think every one of us here understands that the future of our economy in this country depends upon these young individuals being able to get access to higher education. And I believe that this legislation, which I totally support, will at least help with this.

We are now going to have more transparency than we did before. We are going to have publication of lists of those schools which have had the highest rate of increases in recent years, for example.

But we have also spoken to some of the areas such as student loans, the Perkins Act and others, in which we are helping individuals get more funding, or were controlling funding better than we did before. I think that is extraordinarily important as well.

I hate to have borrowing. I love what some schools are doing now and using their funds to help with the tuition issues. But the bottom line is that some borrowing is going to be necessary.

I am very appreciative of some amendments that I was involved with, the Teach for America program, to allow very bright young students in this country that weren't necessarily going into education to be able to teach for a while and hopefully, in some cases, stay in education. I think that is an important step in terms of where we are going.

And I believe that the reauthorization, in general, is absolutely essential if we are going to be able to move forward with respect to education.

The transparency is significant. That alone won't change the cost of higher education. I don't think we have the authority here to tell private schools and even State public schools exactly how to do that. But we certainly have the authority to pass good legislation such as this in order for the public to be able to understand exactly what they are dealing with.

For all these reasons, I would encourage all of us to support this good legis-

lation. Again, I thank all those staff individuals and, of course, the Members that had anything to do with putting this together.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) who, again, was so helpful in the business partnership agreements.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, I am particularly pleased to have had an opportunity in this bill to honor my friend and mentor, the late Congresswoman Patsy Mink, who was a leader on guaranteeing equality for all by creating Patsy T. Mink Fellowships.

While we have made great strides in providing educational opportunities for women and minorities, far too few are becoming college professors. The Mink Fellowships will be used to encourage women and minorities to become professors in fields where they are underrepresented.

In addition to providing more diversity and opportunity in graduate programs, we recognize the need for more opportunities to attain certificates and degrees in high-wage, high-skilled jobs. This bill helps colleges partner with local businesses to create "for-credit" classes focused on the skills and certificates needed for high-wage jobs in the local community.

Also, many of our Nation's students enter college needing remedial education classes. Far too many get stuck taking those classes, never graduates. This bill fixes that. Let's pass it.

Mr. MCKEON. Might I inquire how much time both sides have.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) has 13 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) has 17 minutes remaining.

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Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. MCCARTHY) who's been a champion on campus safety during this legislation.

Mrs. MCCARTHY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report to the Higher Education Opportunity Act, H.R. 4137.

First, let me start out by thanking Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON. I also want to thank the staff for their professionalism and their courtesy and their work for getting this bill to where it is, and my own staff, Kim Becknell and Phil Putter.

The passage of this bill will help millions of Americans make the dream of a college education a reality. In particular, I'm proud to see that many of my provisions are in the bill, including student loan forgiveness for nursing students; incentives for nurses to become instructors, helping to end our nursing shortage; tuition forgiveness for teachers working in New York's BOCES schools; making career and pro-

fessional schools more affordable; expanding the availability of guaranteed student loans or Stafford loans to more nursing and professional schools; expanding the Graduate Assistance Areas of National Need Program, and expanding Project GRAD U.S.A.; also monitoring our Nation's most expensive schools' tuition rates and offering students and families a tool for an education.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the conference report to the Higher Education Opportunity Act, H.R. 4137.

Let me first start out by thanking the Chairman, Ranking Member, and hardworking staff on the Committee on Education and Labor for their efforts and professionalism in passing one of the most comprehensive education bills in years.

The passage of this bill will help millions of Americans make the dream of a college education a reality.

In particular, I am proud to see that many of my provisions are in the bill including:

Student loan forgiveness for nursing students;

Incentives for nurses to become instructors, helping to end our Nation's nursing shortage;

Tuition forgiveness for teachers working in New York's BOCES schools;

Making career and professional schools more affordable;

Expanding the availability of Guaranteed Student Loans or Stafford Loans to more nursing and professional schools;

Ensuring that degrees earned from rabbinical schools will continue to be recognized as the equivalent of bachelor's degrees;

Expanding the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need program;

Expanding Project GRAD USA;

Monitoring our Nation's most expensive schools' tuition rates and offering students and families a tool to estimate increased costs over the course of a college education;

Studying the ability of teachers to meet the needs of students with dyslexia.

I am especially pleased that the bill addresses the need for colleges and universities to have policies in place to immediately warn their campus communities when a serious crime or other emergency threatens the safety of students or employees on campus.

These provisions are similar to those in my "Virginia Tech Victims Campus Emergency Response Policy and Notification Act" or VTV Act, H.R. 5735.

The tragic events of April 16, 2007, on the campus of Virginia Tech, reminded us that horrific incidents can happen anywhere and that we must be prepared.

The addition of an emergency notification provision to the Jeanne Clery Act will help ensure that students and employees are empowered with information about potential significant threats to their safety such as an unknown shooting suspect at large or an impending natural disaster.

Because emergencies can escalate or spread quickly it is vital that emergency notifications occur without any delay and these provisions appropriately provide that warnings must occur "immediately . . . upon confirmation" of a threat.

Minutes can mean the difference between life and death.

Using both high and low tech means, many institutions across the country, including Florida Atlantic University, Ferrum College and Northern Illinois University, have already adopted this approach and are issuing campuswide emergency notifications in less than 30 minutes after an incident has occurred.

These provisions will be a very fitting living memorial to the innocent victims of April 16, 2007 and I applaud their family members who have sought to have something positive come out of that dark day. The Virginia Tech Victims Family group members have been tireless advocates for safer campuses and their devotion has helped make these provisions a reality. I would ask that the victims' names be included at an appropriate place in the RECORD.

I would also like to thank Catherine Bath, Jonathan Kassa and S. Daniel Carter of the nonprofit organization Security On Campus, Inc., SOC, for their leadership on and help with these issues. Founded in 1987 by Connie Clery and her late husband Howard after their daughter Jeanne's murder in a campus residence hall, SOC continues to be the Nation's leading voice for safer campuses and victims' rights on campus.

To honor the memory of the lives that were lost as a result of the incident at Virginia Tech, I humbly submit the following names in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD:

Ross Abdallah Alameddine, Christopher James Bishop, Brian Roy Bluhm, Ryan Christopher Clark, Austin Michelle Cloyd, Jocelyne Couture-Nowak, Kevin P. Granata, and Matthew Gregory Gwaltney.

Caitlin Millar Hammaren, Jeremy Michael Herbstritt, Rachael Elizabeth Hill, Emily Jane Hilscher, Jarrett Lee Lane, Matthew Joseph La Porte, Henry J. Lee, and Liviu Librescu.

G.V. Loganathan, Partahi Mamora Halomoan Lumbantoruan, Lauren Ashley McCain, Daniel Patrick O'Neil, Juan Ramon Ortiz-Ortiz, Minal Hiralal Panchal, Daniel Alejandro Perez, and Erin Nicole Peterson.

Michael Steven Pohle, Jr., Julia Kathleen Pryde, Mary Karen Read, Reema Joseph Samaha, Waleed Mohamed Shaalan, Leslie Geraldine Sherman, Maxine Shelly Turner, and Nicole Regina White.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. TIERNEY) who did groundbreaking work and made such an effort to make sure the States meet the responsibility for financing public higher education.

Mr. TIERNEY. Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Ranking Member MCKEON. This was a cooperative effort, a bipartisan effort for sure focusing on access and affordability.

There's a partnership in education, higher education in particular, between parents and children, entire families, levels of government at both the State and Federal level, and the institutions. The families for too long have seen their share of that partnership go up and up in tuition and fees.

This Congress dealt with the reconciliation bill last year, putting \$20

billion additionally in for Pell Grants, reducing the cost of loans. We needed to ask these institutions to step up to the plate, and we've done that in this bill. They have incentives to keep their tuition low and the incentives go to more aid to the students. They're going to be held accountable by being required to report any reasons for tuition increases.

States are going to have to maintain their investment in higher education so they can't supplant their responsibilities with either the money from the Federal Government or by charging students more in tuition and fees. If they do, they won't get access to a program. So they have that incentive to move forward.

We restore the integrity and accountability to the student loan programs, we've provided loan forgiveness for people, and all of this focuses, Mr. Speaker, on families and makes that partnership work.

I support the bill and ask my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. HOLT) and thank him for all of his work on the foreign language partnerships and the creation of the deputy assistant secretary.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to join the others in commending Chairman MILLER and Mr. MCKEON and allow me to point out some of the good provisions that are in this bill that I have worked on.

It allows Pell Grants to be used year round and by part-time students. It empowers community colleges to provide childcare programs so that working mothers can attend school. It has grants and loan forgiveness for math, science, and foreign language students who pledge to work in those areas after graduation.

As the chairman just said, it creates a deputy assistant secretary for international and foreign language education. It directs the Institute of Medicine to study the shortage of nursing faculty, which is one of the principal reasons for the shortage of nurses in America.

It provides funding to institutions of higher education that encourage science and engineering students to develop foreign language proficiency. It creates a scholarship database of financial assistance for post-secondary and graduate programs in science, technology, and engineering.

There are many other good features in this bill, and I, again, commend those who put it together. And I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ALTMIRE) and thank him for his work on the business workforce partnerships and on the textbook rental program.

Mr. ALTMIRE. Mr. Speaker, this bill is the next step in our efforts to make college more affordable and accessible for American families. I would like to take a moment to highlight four of the provisions I included in this bill.

This bill encourages colleges and employers to join together to form business workforce partnerships that will help graduating students find jobs and provide local businesses the skilled workers they need. It also provides grants to minority-serving institutions to help them recruit and prepare the teachers of tomorrow and improve the diversity of our Nation's workforce.

Additionally, my language added to this bill forgives the student loans of veterans who are determined to be totally and permanently disabled by the VA.

And finally, the conference report includes an amendment that I offered along with Congressman TIM RYAN to establish textbook rental programs to help students save money.

This conference report is a significant improvement to our higher education system, and I am proud to have been a part of the conference committee that reported this bill.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I am happy to yield now to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER), a member of the committee, for 3 minutes.

Mr. SOUDER. I thank Ranking Member MCKEON for his leadership and yielding the time, and I also want to thank Chairman MILLER for working with us to develop a bipartisan bill.

You hear a lot about the controversies between the parties and the partisanship, but here is a huge piece of legislation that we were able to work through in a basically unanimous way between the House and even the Senate.

I want to talk about a few amendments that I worked with. In fact, there was controversy on each one of these things, but we were able to come to reconciliation.

One is GEAR UP, which is widely supported, and my good friend, CHAKA FATTAH, developed this concept. I was an original cosponsor. We moved it with a Democratic President and a Republican Congress, then a Republican Congress with a Republican President sustained the program, and now a Democratic Congress with a Republican President. But in that we've made some significant changes that allow GEAR UP to put a 2-1 match for scholarship money because one of the intentions of this was to get actual cash to help students get to college who were low-income, and we wanted to give them a commitment in junior high that we will back them up. And this will help balance that back more to cash to those students.

It also allows them to work with the first year of college and to connect with TRIO and others and not just get them there.

In the Drug-Free Student Loan provision, which has been much aligned by pro-drug groups around the country, we've clarified the Department of Education's confusion on how best to implement this plus added a warning that the universities and colleges are to tell the students that they're at risk of losing their loan if they're convicted of a drug crime. They can get it back with a drug test. They can get it back the third time. You can go to college but not at taxpayer expense.

We also had an amendment dealing with for-profits' cohort default rates. One of the unintended consequences if you make it too difficult for how many students don't graduate, that for-profit schools would have stopped seeking minority, low-income students, or any subgroup that shows any risk of more defaults of student loans. And we would have had the unintended consequence if we didn't delay the implementation of the 3-year averaging, which we also worked to get, and I appreciate the chairman working with this because this is very important in many of these for-profit technical schools or others that are serving higher-need, less historically graduating percentages. Our goal with GEAR UP, with TRIO, and others is to increase those percentages, but you don't want to punish the colleges that reach out.

We also changed in distance education. We made it easier for basically Internet universities or colleges and universities that use that to get accreditation because if you choke the accreditation, you will cut off the expansion and the accessibility. And this is very important for many colleges and universities.

Lastly, I had an amendment in committee that was defeated, but Senator GREGG proposed it in the Senate, and this is the Academic Bill of Rights. I'm pleased that not only it passed the Senate but that the House in effect receded to the Senate. This is something that David Horowitz had advocated for many years, and I'm pleased this is in the bill, too.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER for his work and Ranking Member MCKEON.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. YARMUTH) and thank him for his work on the Teach to Reach grants and the students success grants for community college students.

Mr. YARMUTH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, and I want to thank you, Chairman MILLER, and the Senate committee chairs for drafting a bill that will help millions of Americans go to college and graduate without crippling debt.

I'm proud to have introduced a number of this bill's provisions that will help to ensure every American has a

world-class education. Our Nation's teachers confront a multitude of challenges, and if we aren't providing them with the tools to succeed, we're failing them and their students.

This legislation authorizes grants to train general education teachers to work with students who have autism and other disabilities. A program to make sure educators learn the best techniques to help kids read at grade level and student success grants that will help students stay in college to complete their degrees and succeed in the workplace. The revolutionizing Education Through Digital Investment Act will better engage young students by greatly expanding the ways technology is utilized in the classroom.

There is no greater way to impact the future of our country than by ensuring that all of our children receive the highest quality education. I therefore urge my colleagues to join me in enacting this critically important legislation.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, could I inquire how much time we have left.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. HOLDEN). The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) has 10 minutes. The gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER) has 12 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCKEON. I would be happy to yield at this time to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. TIM MURPHY) for 3 minutes.

Mr. TIM MURPHY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and ranking member for the College Opportunity and Affordability Act, which I'm here to offer my strong support, and I thank Chairman MILLER and Congressman MCKEON for ensuring the language for my bill, H.R. 2220, the Mental Health Security for America's Families in Education Act, was included in the legislation.

This language directs the Secretary of Education to clarify how and when schools can communicate with the parent if a student demonstrates that they pose a significant risk of suicide, homicide, or assault. Schools acting in good faith by communicating with parents would also be protected from liability.

The current Family Education Rights and Privacy Act passed in 1974 was originally passed to protect the confidentiality of student records. However, it's a confusing array of regulations meant to notify parents but often stands in the way as schools are more prone to call an attorney to get clarification than they are to call parents.

As a child psychologist, I understand the importance of confidentiality, but there are times that it may be in the best interest of the student to inform those who can provide the necessary help to protect them and others. Parents are in the best position to help students suffering from mental illness by providing emotional support med-

ical history, coordinating care with various mental health professionals, and long-term follow up. Parents will be around long after the school is gone.

Behind a law like this there are stories of beautiful lives tragically stopped in their youth. Children like Stephanie Cady from North Franklin Township who was a junior at Elizabethtown College until she withdrew for medical reasons. According to her parents, she was struggling with depression and paranoia during her sophomore year. Her friends persuaded her to get help, but her parents were never told that she was taking medication until just this past Christmas. Unfortunately, the right combination of help from her parents and therapists came too late and, sadly, she took her own life in April of 2008.

In 2002, Charles Mahoney from Burgettstown took his own life while in school at Allegheny College in Pennsylvania.

And since the passing of their children, the Mahoneys and the Cadys have advocated for change to existing laws so the parents can help before it is too late.

Families know the privacy laws that prevent schools from sharing information with parents have to be changed so the parents can get involved to help with the children that they love. Our shared hope is that through the important change of law, their actions will prevent other parents from suffering the same losses, and their children's lives can be remembered at least in saving the lives of others.

This bill we are dealing with today is taking an important step in saving those lives, and I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for their support of this critically important and life-saving provision that will prevent other tragedies like this and Virginia Tech happening again in the future.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. GRIJALVA) and I want to thank him for his work on the cohort default rate and on the year-round Pell Grant.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Thank you, Chairman MILLER, for your work on this very, very important piece of legislation, the first time in a decade Congress is going to pass a Higher Education Act. I'm happy to support this long past-due improvement to higher education.

This legislation is about inclusion and not exclusion. The bill simplifies the means by which students and families can research colleges, apply for help, and gather information to aid in the important decisions we all must make.

□ 1400

It expands access and support for poor students and students of color

through changes to Pell Grants and improvements to TRIO and GEAR UP, additional support for students who have with disabilities, additional support for veterans and their families.

This piece of legislation is a hallmark of the work of this Congress and this session. I'm proud to be on the committee and proud to serve in the development of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, today, for the first time in a decade, Congress will pass a higher education act, and I am happy to support the long past-due improvements to higher education that will be put into effect by the passage of this bill.

This Higher Education Opportunity Act demonstrates a commitment by this Congress to inclusion. The bill simplifies the means by which students and families can research colleges, apply for student aid and gather information to aid in the important decision making process.

It expands access and support for poor students and students of color through changes to Pell Grants and improvements to TRIO and GEAR UP, making college accessible to first-generation students and those who are most likely to be expensed out of college.

It offers expanded support for veterans and their families to honor their continued sacrifice by creating new scholarships and by establishing education support centers and other services to aid in access to education.

It establishes more opportunities for students with disabilities to gain equal access to college by offering national centers of support, aiding colleges in recruitment and retention of students with disabilities, and expands Pell Grant eligibility. Additionally, one of my priorities will create model demonstration programs to improve the access to quality materials for students with print disabilities. It will also create a commission to consider ways to better distribute these materials.

The rising cost of a college education means that students now more than ever must be informed about their decisions as they relate to living expenses and borrowing for education. This bill will add a number of mechanisms to aid students in making these choices, including a provision I worked hard to add that will improve the way cohort default rates are calculated. These changes, though more modest than I had hoped, will encourage schools and lenders to provide better financial literacy to guide students with post-college debt.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act marks a significant improvement in our national commitment to inclusive access to higher education and expresses our continued efforts to make college more affordable and accessible.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and thank her for all her work on the TRIO program. It is so important to get kids to college and to stay in college.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Thank you.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for the conference report on H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act. I am a proud cosponsor of this legislation; and I thank

Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member MCKEON, and the conferees.

I want to highlight two achievements of particular importance to my constituents.

The first is a provision that broadens the discretion afforded to school financial aid administrators. It allows them to take into account expenses incurred by families who are caring for an adult dependent when calculating a student's financial aid package. This sounds like a minor technical change, but it is not.

A constituent of mine shared a very personal story about her family's struggle to make ends meet while caring for their eldest child, who is a disabled adult, and also trying to send their youngest to college. In determining whether this family qualified for financial aid, an administrator could not take this situation into consideration. With the provision included in this bill, they now can.

We have also taken great steps in this legislation to ensure the continued success of the Upward Bound Program. This program plays a very important role in my district helping first generation and low-income high school students achieve their dreams of a college education. These programs have faced challenges over the past year. I am proud we have been able to resolve these issues.

We have simplified the FAFSA form and done many other steps. I thank you for your efforts.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. How much time is remaining, might I inquire of the Chair.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. GEORGE MILLER) has 10 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) has 7½ minutes remaining.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to yield at this time to my good friend from across the aisle, a former member of the committee, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FATTAH), 1 minute.

Mr. FATTAH. Thank you.

In 1997, when we created GEAR UP in this legislation, it was an idea. Today, after 10 years, some 2 million young people later, it stands as the largest early college awareness program in our country's history, operating in 48 States and in many of our territories. It has been an extraordinary success. Eighty-five percent of the young people graduated from high school, 64 percent going on to college.

I want to thank Chairman MILLER and the ranking member, BUCK MCKEON, RUBÉN HINOJOSA and MARK SOUDER and the committee for tweaking GEAR UP in a very positive way, taking the language from the GEAR UP and Go Act that I introduced, adding a seventh year to focus on that entry into college and retention issues and also allowing dual and concurrent enrollment, along with a number of

anti-dropout prevention efforts at the community college and high school level.

I want to thank the committee. This is a great bill overall, and GEAR UP is wonderful. But the increase in Pell, the simplification of the FAFSA form, there is a lot that could be said. This is a historic piece of legislation, and I thank you for the time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HARE), and I want to thank him for his work on dislocated workers and on the rural communities.

Mr. HARE. I thank the Chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the College Opportunity and Affordability Act conference report.

The conference report includes the College and University Rural Education Act, which I introduced with Representatives LOEBSACK and ZACK SPACE. This measure will stop the brain drain and create opportunities in rural America by increasing enrollment of rural high school graduates in institutions of higher education; creating employment pipelines; and providing training for professions of need in rural areas.

Today's bill also includes a provision I developed with Mr. LOEBSACK to prepare individuals to serve as administrators and principals in rural areas. School leadership is key to student achievement, and rural America experiences a huge deficit in this area.

I included a measure to help dislocated workers by informing them of their right to an alternative income calculation when applying for financial aid. This will ensure that workers who lost their jobs have access to retraining opportunities.

This conference report builds upon the work we started in the College Cost Reduction Act. I commend Ranking Member MCKEON and my chairman, Chairman MILLER, and urge all my colleagues to support the conference report.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. SCOTT) and thank him for all of his work on the Historically Black Colleges and Universities and on the modeling and simulation program.

Mr. SCOTT of Virginia. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank and commend Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member MCKEON, Chairman HINOJOSA, and Ranking Member KELLER for their hard work on this bill.

This bill contains many important provisions that will make college more affordable for our students, particularly the Pell Grant and loan forgiveness provisions.

It also has many provisions helpful to institutions of higher learning, especially Historically Black Colleges and Universities which have been funded

for new master's programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Predominantly Black Institutions.

It also, as the Chairman has indicated, has a new program to help the rapidly growing field of modeling and simulation.

Mr. Speaker, there is new language in the bill dealing with the accreditation of colleges, and it is important to explicitly note that this new language does not adversely affect or change anti-discrimination provisions.

The bill also contains a direction to the Department of Education to reword the financial aid application to make it clear that students can get financial aid, even if they have a drug offense.

We have worked long and hard on this bill, and for the foregoing reasons, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. Speaker, it has been ten years since the Higher Education Act has been reauthorized and I am pleased that we will now make many needed updates to this law. I would like to commend Chairman MILLER, Ranking Member MCKEON, Chairman HINOJOSA, and Ranking Member KELLER for their work on this bill. I would also like to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member of the Senate's Health, Education, Labor & Pensions committee, Senators KENNEDY and ENZI. Additionally, I would like to express my gratitude to Senator MIKULSKI for all her efforts in Senator KENNEDY's absence. I would also like to thank the House and Senate Committees' staff; we could not have reached this point without your hard work and dedication.

This bill contains many important provisions that will help make a college education more affordable for student and their families. I am particularly pleased with the increase in the authorization of the Pell grant and the loan forgiveness provision that will aid students who give back to their community if they enter a profession in an area of national need, including mental health professionals and child welfare workers.

The legislation also specifically assists minority students in several ways. For example, it contains a provision to promote cultural diversity in the entertainment media industry. It will also require that a study be conducted on whether race, ethnicity, or gender biases exist in the design of standardized admission tests used by higher education institutions. The information collected for the study is intended to be made available to the public—except in cases where the entity providing the information shows good cause or in the case where the information is proprietary—so that if such biases are found we can work to correct them.

The bill requires the Department of Education to conform hate crime reporting requirements to FBI guidelines to more accurately report incidents of hate crimes on our campuses. This will result in consistent and accurate reporting of crimes against persons and crimes against property. In addition, improved data will give parents and students a more accurate sense of campus safety and education institutions a better picture of their campus climate.

The legislation also contains many provisions helpful to institutions of higher edu-

cation. The Secretary will now be required to develop and maintain a plan to help schools cope with natural and man-made disasters. The bill also creates an Education Disaster and Emergency Relief Loan Program to provide emergency loan funds to schools after a federal declared major disaster or emergency, including those schools affected by the 2005 Gulf Hurricanes. Additionally, the bill includes a provision which significantly helps schools affected by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita by holding them harmless for purposes of Title III funding.

This bill also does a great deal to help the Historically Black Colleges and Universities. The authorization levels for HBCUs have been increased to \$375 million dollars, which is almost three times the amount that is in the current Higher Education Act. The amount for the Historically Black Graduate Institutions program has significantly increased as well. The bill also provides funding for Masters programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Predominantly Black Institutions that focus on science, technology, engineering, mathematics, health and other fields in which Blacks are underrepresented.

The legislation strengthens and develops college-level programs in the rapidly growing field of Modeling and Simulation. This is a field of study that refers to replicating a system on a smaller scale or on a computer for extensive examination. There is not a single field of study or profession that cannot benefit from this type of analysis including urban planning, medicine and national security.

This legislation includes several positive changes to the TRIO programs, which provide assistance to low-income and first generation college-going students. The bill eliminates the Absolute Priority conditions imposed on Upward Bound programs by the Department of Education without requiring a recompetition. In addition, the bill creates an appeals process for TRIO programs to ensure that the grantmaking process is as fair and transparent as possible.

Mr. Speaker, there is a clarification that I feel must be made with regard to new language added to an existing accreditation provision. Current law requires that accrediting agencies or associations apply and enforce their standards in a manner that respects the missions of institutions of higher education. This bill states that respecting missions of institutions of higher education includes religious missions. It is important to explicitly note what is and is not intended by the new language. Pursuant to the House Report filed by the House Committee on Education and Labor on December 19, 2007 (H. Rept. 110-500, Part I), it is important to make clear that this new language does not affect or change nondiscrimination provisions. The House Report states in relevant part:

"The new language requiring accrediting agencies or associations to apply and enforce their standards in a manner that respects the missions of institutions of higher education, including religious missions, reflects Congress' belief that accredited institutions should be allowed to choose their own missions rather than having them imposed or regulated by accrediting bodies. In response to concerns raised by Representatives ROBERT C. SCOTT

(D-VA) and RUBEN HINOJOSA (D-TX) about whether the amendment would harm the ability of accreditors to enforce nondiscrimination provisions, the author of the amendment, Representative TIMOTHY WALBERG (R-MI), explained that the provision would not affect nondiscrimination provisions and instead would require accreditors to respect the missions of schools, including when the missions are religious.

"It is the intent of the Committee that this amendment does not change or alter current accreditation requirements, and the exemptions included in those requirements (such as those allowed by the American Bar Association and the American Psychological Association), for the enforcement of nondiscrimination provisions. The Committee also notes that this provision does not alter title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 or other federal anti-discrimination statutes, which remain applicable to institutions of higher education to the same extent as before. The Department of Education shall not promulgate any regulations that provide any new exceptions to current nondiscrimination provisions.

"It is also the intent of the Committee that this amendment does not change or alter current accreditation requirements, and the exemptions included in those requirements, for training professionals in the practice of medicine and other health care professions."

Similarly, the Senate report that accompanies S. 1642 (the companion bill to H.R. 4137) filed by the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions on November 15, 2007 (Report No. 110-231) confirms this position. The Senate report states in relevant part:

"Accrediting agencies or associations recognized by the Department of Education are invested with a public trust and perform an important public function. Congress expects that those receiving Department recognition will perform those functions with the same diligence and competence as would be provided by any public body and that their procedures will be conducted with the same level of transparency, due process, and accountability that would apply to the Department if it performed this function itself.

"The new language requiring accrediting agencies or associations to apply and enforce their standards in a manner that respects the missions of institutions of higher education, including religious missions, reflects these goals. It is not intended to allow an institution to deny a person participation in, the benefits of, or to subject a person to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance under existing laws, including those with respect to race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability; or because the person has not complied with a standard of the institution that requires the person to discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, or disability."

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to highlight a provision included in the Statement of Managers to the Conference which I feel is extremely important. Currently, the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) is written in a way that misleads many students to believe that if they have been convicted of a

drug offense, they do not qualify for financial aid. In the Statement of Managers, Conferees encourage the Department to reword the FAFSA to more accurately reflect the ways in which students who have been convicted of drug offenses can obtain financial aid.

Mr. Speaker, we have worked long and hard for a comprehensive, bipartisan bill. While not perfect, I believe this bill goes a long way towards making college more affordable for students and their families and towards helping our institutions and higher education provide a quality education to our nation's youth. For the foregoing reasons, I support the bill and urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act is truly a bipartisan achievement, reflecting major priorities of both parties, as you can see from the debate. In recognition of that fact, I would like to take just a moment to touch on some of the reforms that Members on our side of the aisle were able to secure in this bill.

This bill includes meaningful steps to address the college cost crisis. I have been fighting this battle for years, and the steps in this bill are a victory for students and their families.

We have ensured that this bill increases accountability through the power of sunshine and transparency. H.R. 4137 will put quality information in the hands of students and parents to help them make more informed decisions when choosing their path for obtaining a higher education.

This conference report protects student privacy by prohibiting the development of a Federal unit record system. Republicans believe students should not be forced to relinquish their privacy just because they wish to pursue post-secondary education.

This bill includes numerous reforms to strengthen Pell Grants for low-income students. The bill now prohibits Pell Grants from being provided to sex offenders that remain involuntarily confined by closing a loophole that allowed these individuals, deemed so dangerous that they cannot be released after completing their incarceration, to receive taxpayer-funded Pell Grants to pursue higher education. The bill also includes a sensible funding limitation to protect taxpayers and ensure students are making progress toward completing their degrees.

This conference report also includes a proposal to make transfer of credit policies public so students can plan ahead and avoid wasting time and money. It encourages States to develop and improve articulation agreements to make credit transfer easier among institutions within a State and across State lines.

Republicans have worked with our colleagues on the other side of the aisle for years to make it easier to apply for financial aid. Thanks to that effort, this legislation will create a shorter

EZ-FAFSA form and make financial aid information available to students earlier in the college planning process.

Several committee members championed new efforts to ensure our higher education system can help meet our growing international competitive challenges. Specifically, the bill includes provisions to help increase the number of math, science, and foreign language teachers and professionals.

Republicans believe students should not be discriminated against on college campuses because of their political or ideological views, and that's why we fought to ensure the college conference would include an Academic Bill of Rights.

The bill also protects local control and prevents Federal meddling in curricula in programs under the Higher Education Act, including teacher training programs and within academic competitiveness grants.

Finally, in a time of war, we all recognize that our higher education system must be flexible enough to meet the unique needs of student-soldiers. The bill includes numerous proposals to improve higher education opportunities for members of the Armed Forces, including changes to allow greater participation in TRIO college access programs and improvements to the way financial aid is calculated for military personnel.

The bill also creates a Web site to make it easier for veterans and members of the military to find information on financial aid opportunities available to them, and it requires States to provide in-state tuition rates to members of the military, their spouses, and their dependent children.

These are just a few of the many reforms that were important to members of the committee during this process. I want to thank Chairman MILLER again for working with me to ensure this bill is truly bipartisan, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in voting yes on this bill that contains so many important provisions.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, Members of the House, families across America and students everywhere, it is a pleasure to yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois, who revolutionized and changed and simplified the student loan application form for all of America's families and students from this day forward, Mr. EMANUEL.

Mr. EMANUEL. When I was campaigning, I met a firefighter, Pat Kehoe, who told me about the night before he and his wife were trying to fill out the form for their only child to go to college. He talked about it was 108 questions, how complicated it was.

So I went and personally checked it. Go to page 8 and complete the columns on the left of worksheets A, B, and C. Enter the student, and spouse, totals in questions 44, 45, and 46 respectively.

Worksheet B, first of 12 items: Payments to tax-deferred pension and savings plans, including, but not limited to, amounts reported on the W-2 form in boxes 12a through 12d, codes D, E, F, G, H, and S.

If you can fill this out, forget college; go to graduate school. This is the most complicated form out there, for kids just trying to go to college.

This new legislation is going to take that 108 questions, those eight pages, take it down to two pages, 44 questions, and take it from bureaucratize language down to consumer-friendly language.

It's high time that parents who were trying to make sure that their kids had a shot at the American Dream don't have the government stepping in the way and preventing that.

I want to thank the chairman.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. EMANUEL. This legislation goes from protecting colleges to empowering college students, and this Congress will be remembered because of the chairman being the most friendly to college students and those families, for going to \$20 billion in additional aid to kids to go to college, for the GI Bill which is new, and now this legislation.

And I thank the chairman for his work, as well as the ranking member, for making sure that families across America who are trying to send their kids to college no longer have to jump through hoops every year filling out a form that was more friendly to the bureaucracy than it was to their family and their children.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER), and I want to thank him for his work on the sustainability program and creating a summit on sustainability in colleges and universities.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this measure and for the hard work that the chairman and the ranking member have done. This is truly a landmark reauthorization. We're all pleased to see it come forward.

The major challenge of this century is literally the future of the planet, global warming, sustainable development in a water-stressed, energy short, carbon-constrained world.

To help us cope, this higher education reauthorization incorporates the provision of our Higher Education Sustainability Act. Inspired by the late Debbie Murdock from Portland State University, it will fund programs in our colleges and universities for research, for training of students, for sustainability practices on campus.

It also does direct the Secretary of Education to convene a sustainability

summit to be able to showcase all these best practices.

One of the things that I am pleased about as I travel around the country, is looking at the environmental progress on our campuses. This legislation will help accelerate that vital process, and I deeply appreciate what the committee has done.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. I yield 30 seconds to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. KIND) and thank him for his work on the real-time writers program.

Mr. KIND. Mr. Speaker, as a 10-year member of the Education and Labor Committee, I'm very proud of the product that the chairman and the ranking member and members of the committee have produced in this Congress today. It's the most important investment that this country is going to make in the future of our Nation for many years to come, but I'm especially grateful for the inclusion of the real-time court reporter scholarship program.

The court reporters are the guardians of our public record, and not too many of my colleagues realize that with the Telecom Act, we mandated closed captioning for every television program in the United States. But because of the shortage of court reporters, we're having a hard time filling our courtrooms and meeting closed captioning services.

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So I'm glad they included it; I commend them for the job they've done; and I ask my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. May I inquire of the Speaker as to the time remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. MILLER) has 5 minutes remaining. The gentleman from California (Mr. MCKEON) has 2 minutes remaining.

Mr. MCKEON. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of our time.

For years, Republicans have fought on behalf of students and families to make college more affordable. Now our cause is bipartisan, and our vision for reform is the centerpiece of a comprehensive Higher Education Act reauthorization.

For students and families grappling with rising college costs, this bill establishes college affordability comparison tools to help put cost increases into perspective. Students will be able to search, sort, and compare key cost indicators for every school in the country. We will identify institutions that are the most costly, the least costly, and those with the fastest rising costs. And for schools engaging in a pattern of extraordinarily high cost increases, we demand greater disclosure and concrete steps to identify inefficiencies and fix them.

This legislation reflects Republican principles for reform, including finan-

cial aid simplification, protection of student privacy, safeguards for taxpayer dollars, an emphasis on competitiveness, and many more positive reforms.

Before I close, I want to recognize the staff on both sides of the aisle for their hard work. I want to thank Amy Jones, in particular, for her tireless efforts. Amy has carried this bill now through two Congresses, and we couldn't have done it without her.

I also want to recognize Susan Ross and Rob Borden on my staff, along with my staff director, Sally Stroup.

I'd also like to recognize Chairman MILLER's staff—and I'm trying to learn their names—including Gaby Gomez, Julie Radocchia, and Jeff Appel; great people, and they've worked hard and worked well together.

Mr. Speaker, this bill isn't perfect, but it will make a real difference to students and families struggling to pay for college. I encourage all of my colleagues to join me in voting yes to send this bill to the President for his signature.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, and members of the committee, I'm very proud of this legislation. I'm very proud of the members of my committee on both sides of the aisle. This legislation doesn't just belong to this committee at this time or to the majority party just at this time, this legislation has been worked on by many people on both sides of the aisle.

When the Republicans were in the majority and Mr. MCKEON was the subcommittee chair, he pushed hard for this legislation. And Mr. KILDEE has spent many years on our committee working on behalf of higher education. And Mr. HINOJOSA authored legislation, along with Mr. MCKEON, that made it through the House in the last session.

Why has that been true? Why is this legislation so broadly supported? Because we all understand the importance of a well-educated American population, and we all understand the urgency of this moment. At no time in our history has America needed a better educated population than it needs today.

And we understand the importance of a college education and what it means to America's families, what it means to young people as they start out in their careers, as they start out their families, and their ability to provide for themselves and go to jobs that are interesting, that work for them, that make sense for them, and yet be able to have the skills so they can continue in the American economic system. This legislation does all of those things.

This legislation helps to make college more affordable. It certainly helps

to make it more accessible. And it has done that because of the agreements that we have reached on both sides of the aisle. Mr. MCKEON has pushed long and hard for increases in the Pell Grants, long and hard for accountability in this system, and long and hard to make sure that the cost of college, that we have greater transparency, that we understand it better, that parents would be able to decipher, that students would be able to decipher and understand it. This legislation improves this act with respect to all of those provisions of the law.

I tried to recognize the contributions made by each Member on our side of the aisle and the programs that they worked on to increase access to college for so many populations that haven't been given the full opportunity in the past that will be able to take advantage of that opportunity.

And finally, this legislation makes it more affordable for many students. It's in combination with what we did in the reconciliation bill, where we provided \$20 billion in new resources for students by cutting the interest rates, by providing forgiveness for loans, by increasing the Pell Grants, and providing real-time tuition assistance for those who want to go into teaching.

This is an important piece of legislation; it's important to the Congress, it's important to our Nation, it's important to families and students who struggle mightily to figure out how they can finance an education.

I think this is a big step in assuring that every qualified student should be able to afford college. They may have to borrow some money, but it's well worth that if they can achieve a college education. And I think it's going to make a major contribution to strengthening the American economy.

This is a moment in time legislation and authorization of the Higher Education Act. But for over 45 years, there has been a fixed star in increasing the opportunity for young people to go to college and increasing the wherewithal for families and students to afford a college education, and that was the Senator from Massachusetts, who, unfortunately, is not able to be with us as we pass this conference report today in the House and in the Senate, but he is with us in great spirit. He called the other day to congratulate us with great enthusiasm. He wasn't convinced we were actually going to get it done, and he said he was quite excited that we did. And he was looking forward to the passage of this legislation.

He has been a moving force for opportunity at all levels of society. But he, first and foremost, has understood the opportunity that education provides. Whether it's early childhood education, preschool education, elementary, secondary education, community colleges, 4-year colleges, graduate schools, Senator TED KENNEDY has been a champion

of making sure that those doors are open to everybody in this society. And this legislation, I think, honors that commitment that Senator KENNEDY has had for so many years as he has continued to sit on the Education Committee in the United States Senate and pound out this legislation that is so important to America's families, to America's students, and to America's economy.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this legislation. I thanked them earlier, but I want to thank all the members of the committee on both sides of the aisle. I want to thank Mr. MCKEON for his leadership on this issue, and certainly to all of the staff for their help. And happy birthday to Joe Novotny.

Mr. DINGELL. Mr. Speaker, today the House is voting on the conference report for H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act. I want to thank my dear friend Senator KENNEDY for all of his hard work on this bill.

Like our fuel and food, college tuition prices continue to rise, making a college degree unaffordable for many of our constituents. If Congress is serious about helping our country through this economic downturn, we must provide our young people with the tools and resources to be successful now and in an increasingly global economy.

Back home in Michigan, we are facing higher and higher unemployment rates. Many are forced to look to a new career field after a plant closes, and others are simply having a hard time transferring the skills they learned from their previous career to a new one. I want to do everything I can to help the citizens of Michigan's 15th Congressional District through this tough time and I believe that access to a college education is one way to do so.

Many of you have probably heard from constituents who have had trouble navigating the federal student aid program or difficulty filling out the extensive application forms. The last thing we want is to discourage anyone from attending college merely because they find the federal aid process confusing or overwhelming.

H.R. 4137 proposes to streamline the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to make it easier for students and their families to navigate. This will be done by cutting the number of questions of the FAFSA form in half and allowing applicants to save their information rather than re-filing a new form each year. It will also allow students and their families to determine their Expected Family Contribution and their federal student aid package prior to college so that families can plan accordingly.

For those of us with children and grandchildren, we all know how expensive a college education can be. Back home in Michigan, over 143,000 students take out need-based loans each year. While this bill will not cover the cost of a college education, it will help to make the costs a little more manageable by increasing the value of the Pell grant. H.R. 4137 will increase the maximum Pell grant increase from the current level of \$5,800 to \$8,000 by the 2014 school year. More impor-

tantly, this bill will allow students access to Pell grants year round, ensuring that students who are going to school part-time will have access to this aid.

For those many students who do rely on student loans to pay for school, this legislation will ensure that lenders are serving the best interests of our students. This will be done by requiring higher education institutions and lenders to adopt strict codes of conduct and ban all gifts and revenue sharing agreements between institutions and lenders. Lenders will now also be required to provide students with full and fair information about their loans before they sign on the dotted line, as well as be informed by the lenders of all borrowing options available to them when taking out and repaying loans.

This legislation will increase aid to our veterans and military personnel. The veterans from Iraq and Afghanistan have served our country honorably and it is our duty to ensure that they have access to a college education should they desire to return to school. I know colleges across the country have seen increases in the enrollment of veterans; however, many do not have the resources to give the veterans the support they need. This is frankly unacceptable and this legislation will help correct this problem.

H.R. 4137 will create a scholarship program that could award up to \$5,000 for veterans, their spouses, or their children enrolled in college. It will also create support centers on college campuses designed to coordinate services and assist veterans with enrollment and completion of their degrees. More importantly, H.R. 4137 will ensure that veterans are not penalized by their financial contributions to their GI benefits in the financial aid process.

This bill will reward students who enter public service fields in areas of high-need by establishing a \$10,000 loan forgiveness program for individuals who study to become nurses; early childhood educators; librarians; teachers; school counselors; public sector employees; medical specialists; among other career fields.

Mr. Speaker, as the federal representative of a number of great universities and colleges in my district, I want to ensure that my constituents are able to take advantage of the education these fine institutions provide. However, with Michigan's economy struggling, many students are forced to forego college altogether in favor of working to support their families and pay their bills. Over the August district work period I look forward to going home to these constituents and telling them that a college education can still be an option. I want to tell them that Congress is willing to increase federal aid for students. I want to tell them that Congress is going to make the federal aid application process simpler and easier for them. And at the end of the day, I want to tell my constituents that H.R. 4137 was signed into law. I urge all of my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation, let us all show our constituents that access to a college education is a top priority for Congress.

Mr. SPACE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Conference Report accompanying H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act. This legislation will complete a long-overdue reauthorization of the Higher Education Act, bringing the promise of oppor-

tunity to countless young Americans. I commend Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for their work on this critical legislation.

In particular, I wish to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for including in this conference report provisions from legislation I introduced, H.R. 4139, the College and University Rural Education Act. This legislation will help to foster new opportunities and a higher quality of life for residents of rural America.

The provisions that I mention authorize grants to rural serving institutions to improve access to higher education in rural America, and also to create employment pipelines that benefit the community. These grants can be used by rural-serving institutions to collaborate with regional school districts to improve access to higher education for high school graduates in rural America, where participation lags. Additionally, these grants can be used to create other outreach programs that will bring more nontraditional students back into the classroom.

These grants can also be used to create new employment pipelines for professions of need in the region. By providing support for the development of new training programs for high-need occupations, as well as opportunities for students to attain professional development in these occupations, this legislation goes a long way towards improving the quality of life in rural America.

Again, I wish to thank the Chairman and Ranking Member for all their hard work on this crucial legislation. I also want to thank Congressmen HARE and LOEBSACK for their original cosponsorship for the legislation and support throughout the process. Finally, I want to offer my thanks to all the staff on the Committee for their tireless efforts to improve opportunities for residents of rural areas.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Conference Report on H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act, which will reauthorize the Higher Education Act through Fiscal Year 2012. This is the first time in almost a decade that this bill has been reauthorized, and I am proud to be part of a Congress that has placed such a high priority on making college a reality for all of our Nation's students. This bill builds on legislation that passed last year to help lower college costs and boost federal loan support for our students. Given the state of our economy, it is imperative that we invest in our education system to promote new employment and ensure that today's students can adapt to the jobs of tomorrow.

Two of the main goals of the Higher Education Opportunity Act are to make a college education accessible to all students and to lower college costs for those students and their families. I am pleased that this bill increases the maximum amount of Pell Grants, which help 5.5 million low-income and minority students attend college, from \$5,800 to \$8,000 by the 2014 academic year. This measure also boosts funding for the TRIO program and the Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Program (GEAR UP), which provide college readiness and support for low-income and first-generation students. H.R. 4137 ensures equal college opportunities for

students with disabilities by creating the National Center for Information and Technical Support to improve college recruitment, retention, and completion of students with disabilities, and would also expand eligibility for Pell Grants for students with intellectual disabilities.

H.R. 4137 also establishes a user-friendly website to provide students and families with helpful information about college pricing, and will streamline the cumbersome filing process for Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). Families will now be able to receive estimates of their expected contribution and the amount of financial aid they may receive. H.R. 4137 requires higher education institutions and student loan providers to give borrowers fair and full information on their loan terms and repayment options, as well as promote financial literacy and education for students and families.

One of the goals of the 110th Congress is to create a new generation of innovators so that we continue to build an educated, skilled workforce in the vital areas of science, math, engineering and information technology. To maintain our international competitiveness and economic advantage in the coming years, our Nation must invest more in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) education. That is why I am pleased that H.R. 4137 includes many new initiatives and increases STEM funding. These new programs include grants for colleges and universities to provide incentives for students in STEM majors to teach in these academic areas; the YES Partnership Grant Program, which provides funding to eligible colleges to support minority youth engagement in STEM fields through outreach and hands-on experiential learning; and the Robert C. Byrd Mathematics and Science Honors Scholarship Program, which focuses on encouraging students to earn degrees in math and science.

H.R. 4137 increases college aid and support for our veterans and military families by requiring colleges and universities to treat students returning from military service as continuously enrolled students and preventing active duty servicemembers from accruing interest on student loans for the duration of their activation. The measure also encourages those students who commit to a job in high-need areas and public service for at least five years by establishing a \$10,000 loan forgiveness program for nurses, early childhood educators, foreign language specialists, child welfare workers, school counselors, public sector employees, medical specialists, and mental health professionals. This measure further addresses the shortage of nursing faculty by establishing competitive grants to fund scholarships for nurses studying for advanced degrees with the intention of becoming faculty.

In recent years, our country's college and university campuses have seen terrible tragedies. H.R. 4137 will boost campus safety by helping all colleges develop and implement state of the art emergency systems and campus safety plans, and will also create a National Center for Campus Safety at the Department of Justice. Administrators and students on campuses across the country have also pushed for environmental, or "green," initiatives, and this measure supports these efforts by providing funding for environmental sustainability programs.

Mr. Speaker, H.R. 4137 shows that Congress is committed to the success of our students, and we will work to make sure that they can pursue their dreams without the burdens of unnecessary costs and debt. While we may find ourselves facing hard economic decisions, we must empower the next generation with the necessary tools and invest in their education. The College Opportunity and Affordability Act will set a blueprint for the future, and I encourage all my colleagues to vote for this bill.

Mr. ETHERIDGE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this conference agreement. This is the first time in ten years that we will reauthorize the Higher Education Act, landmark legislation that has strengthened our colleges and universities and made the dream of higher education possible for countless Americans. I commend the bipartisan, bicameral work of Education and Labor Chairman GEORGE MILLER and Ranking Member BUCK MCKEON, and Senators KENNEDY, MIKULSKI and ENZI who crafted this compromise, and I urge my colleagues to join me in support of it.

Our Nation's competitiveness depends on a vigorous college and university system and on ample opportunities for Americans to pursue their educational goals. As the first member of my family to graduate from college, I know firsthand that affordable access to higher education is the key to the American Dream for working families. H.R. 4137 is an important step to make sure our schools remain strong and that students from all walks of life can go to college.

H.R. 4137 keeps costs down for students and provides additional support through Pell Grants and education loans. It strengthens successful college-readiness initiatives and bolsters cooperation between school districts and teacher-preparation faculties. It improves access to emergency notification services for students. And it makes the process of applying to and planning for school easier: streamlining the federal student financial aid application; creating the "College Navigator" to provide cost and aid data to prospective students; and ensuring professors and students know the costs of course textbooks before the semester starts.

I am pleased that this bill includes support for Historically Black Colleges and Universities in my district and across North Carolina, recognizing schools that have added master's degree programs with a new source of grant funding. It also provides new funding for Predominately Black Institutions. These schools, which include Fayetteville State University, Shaw University and North Carolina Wesleyan in my Congressional district, have an important ongoing role in improving educational opportunities for African Americans. I am also pleased that the conference agreement recognizes the situation of military families, like so many families of soldiers at North Carolina's Fort Bragg, who move frequently or are deployed abroad. H.R. 4137 requires states to offer in-state tuition rates to soldiers and their dependents when the soldier is deployed for more than 30 days. We must not allow service to our country to prevent the education of a soldier or his or her family.

Mr. Speaker, education is the key to better lives and a brighter future for individuals and

our Nation. H.R. 4137 improves educational opportunities for all Americans. I am pleased to support this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to join me in voting to pass it.

Mr. FATTAH. Mr. Speaker, I want to especially recognize the good work of GEAR UP students and staff in Philadelphia. Tens of thousands of Philadelphia high school students have been fortunate enough to benefit from GEAR UP, either directly as participants in the State or partnership grants we have been awarded, or indirectly as recipients of the CORE Philly scholarship program which was jump started by GEAR UP. I am proud that Philadelphia has received one of the greatest investments from this exemplary program.

Beyond just the direct benefits of GEAR UP, Philadelphia's students are being raised in communities that are increasingly focused on college and greater opportunities for the next generation. Although not surprising, it is encouraging to learn that when adults (whether teachers, support staff or parents) commit to preparing their students for college, high school graduation rates shoot through the roof. Our students are ready, willing and able to meet the challenges of this new century and the next, we need only prepare and support them.

In Philadelphia we are seeing renewed attention brought to the challenge of abysmal high school graduation rates. I have every confidence that as the educational leaders of our city contemplate strategies to reengage disconnected students and catch those at risk of falling through the cracks, they will look to the national and local successes of GEAR UP.

In the past 10 years, GEAR UP has served millions of students across the country. I look forward to advocating on behalf of the millions more who will benefit in the future and the opportunity to expand this program to even more communities.

Once again, I would like to express my gratitude to my colleagues and their staff who created this ambitious document. The Higher Education Opportunity Act paves the way for a renewed commitment to the future success of our children and the prosperity of our Nation.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act. I thank the Conferees for their work on this issue, and especially commend Chairmen MILLER and KENNEDY, Ranking Members MCKEON and ENZI, and Senator MIKULSKI for their efforts in bringing this bipartisan legislation to the Floor today.

Mr. Speaker, 60 percent of new jobs require some post-secondary education. But paying for college can be a real challenge for many students and their families. In order to maintain America's competitive advantage, spur economic development, and fulfill the potential of our Nation's students, we must make college affordability and accessibility a priority.

This Congress has responded to that challenge. Beginning last year with the largest increase in student assistance since the G.I. Bill, we have worked to open the door to college for our Nation's best and brightest. And today, we continue that commitment.

The bill increases the maximum Pell grant again to \$6,000 for 2009 and \$8,000 for 2014.

It also allows for year-round Pell grants to give students more options and allow them to complete their degrees earlier.

It furthers our ambitious Competitiveness Agenda by creating programs to recruit new science and technology teachers and collaborate with the business community to improve science, technology, engineering, math, and foreign language education. These important provisions will help ensure American innovation in the competitive global economy.

The Conference Report before us today aims to provide more transparency and clarity in the financial aid process by simplifying the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, creating a user-friendly website to centralize information about schools and costs, and ensuring that students and parents get easy-to-understand information about the terms and conditions of Federal and private loans. It also includes provisions to require schools and lenders to adopt strict codes of conduct to avoid conflicts of interest and protect students from aggressive lending practices.

Finally, the Conference Report includes provisions from the Teach for America Act, a bill I introduced with Mr. CASTLE, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. REGULA, and Mr. SARBANES. These provisions will allow Teach for America to expand its reach and put more qualified and enthusiastic teachers in our Nation's classrooms.

Mr. Speaker, today's bill will increase transparency, simplify the financial aid process, and make higher education more affordable. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting it today.

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 4137, the Higher Education Opportunity Act. I want to thank my colleagues on the Education and Labor Committee and in the Senate for their commitment to this important piece of legislation. While this reauthorization is long overdue, I believe this compromise bill will provide millions of our nation's students with increased access to higher education.

This bipartisan bill will help provide families with critical information about the cost of college and student financial aid programs. By helping families better understand the true financial costs of higher education and how they can apply for student aid, families will be better able to make informed choices about their student's education.

The Higher Education Opportunity Act truly an investment in education at all levels. To provide all of our children with a high quality education that will better prepare them for success in school and in life we must ensure that there is a qualified, caring, competent teacher in every classroom, particularly in the early years. This bill makes great progress toward this goal by expanding student loan forgiveness and professional development programs that will help recruit, prepare, and retain teachers in the field of early education.

This bill will also provide more low-income and minority students with support to prepare for and successfully attend college. I am particularly pleased to see provisions in this reauthorization that provide much-needed resources to Native Hawaiian-serving institutions for programs to help Native Hawaiians meet the demands of careers in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics.

Again, I want to thank my colleagues from both chambers for their tireless efforts in advancing this significant legislation. In particular, I would like to recognize Senator TED KENNEDY for his leadership and for his years of dedication to improving access to high quality education for all of our students.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support the Higher Education Opportunity Act.

Mr. EHLERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support the conference report on the Higher Education Opportunity Act. As a conferee on this bill, I am very pleased that we have a final bill before us. I want to thank Chairman MILLER and Ranking Member MCKEON for all their hard work on this bill, and I especially thank them for including provisions that are very important to people in Michigan.

Higher education is vitally important for students entering the workforce and for the global competitiveness of this country. This bill will ensure students have better access to higher education, and that they have received a high quality educational experience when they receive their degree. Now that a college degree is the bare minimum requirement for so many jobs, the need for better access is stronger than ever.

Let me comment on some specific provisions in the bill.

In 2007, Representative BLUMENAUER and I joined together to introduce the Higher Education Sustainability Act (H.R. 3637). I commend Representative BLUMENAUER for his leadership in "greening" colleges and universities, and I am grateful that he allowed me to partner with him on an issue that is so dear to my heart. I am very pleased that provisions of our bill have been included in the conference report, especially now when energy prices and shortages are on everyone's mind.

Simply put, sustainability is meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. As population growth, urban development and growing energy use place stress on our ecosystem, it is imperative that we develop innovative and successful sustainable operations and programs.

Colleges and universities are in a unique position to foster new knowledge, evaluate policies and discover new technologies to address sustainability. Sustainable operations and programs on university campuses include water and energy conservation, recycling, and academic programs such as engineering courses that encourage innovative product designs, e.g., alternative fuels for cars, other new energy sources, and new types of packaging that use fewer natural materials.

The conference report contains two key sustainability provisions. First, it convenes a Summit on Sustainability with higher education experts working in the area of sustainable operations and programs. The Federal Government and university and business leaders are encouraged to identify best practices in sustainability by promoting current efforts, enhancing research and identifying opportunities for partnerships to expand sustainable operations and academic programs. Also, it authorizes the Sustainability Grant Program. The Secretary of Education, in consultation with the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, is authorized to award grants to

colleges and universities to establish sustainability research programs, such as developing new alternative energy sources. It also allows schools to implement sustainability practices on campus.

The conference report also contains an important study of distance education. It requires the Secretary of Education to contract with the National Research Council of the National Academy of Sciences to conduct a scientifically valid study of the quality of distance education, as compared to traditional, campus-based education. With so many students using distance education and a huge Federal investment in helping students attend college, it is critical that we effectively evaluate new modes of instruction to ensure that our students are receiving a topnotch education.

Finally, the conference report contains an array of provisions related to science, technology, engineering and math, collectively "STEM", education. Notably, it includes the National STEM Database to allow students with an interest in the STEM fields to more easily find financial aid. Also, it authorizes important loan forgiveness for college graduates pursuing careers in the STEM fields, and it authorizes the Mathematics and Science Scholars Program to award scholarships to students pursuing STEM majors. Now, more than ever, we must increase the size of our STEM workforce to maintain our competitiveness and national security.

In closing, I support this conference report since it helps students and makes many overdue improvements to the Higher Education Act. I urge all Members to vote in support of it.

Mr. HOLT. Mr. Speaker, I would like to commend Chairman MILLER and Mr. MCKEON for producing a strong piece of legislation. The Higher Education Opportunity Act does what the name suggests. It expands affordability and access to college education for the broadest range of Americans. It expands Pell Grants, the basis of financial aid, and I'm pleased to say it allows Pell Grants to be used year round and for certificate programs and part-time students, something I have been working on for a long time.

This Act will help bring transparency and accountability to student loan programs by requiring institutions of higher education and lenders to adopt strict codes of conduct, and protects students from aggressive marketing practices by lenders. It will provide students with full information about their borrowing options when taking out loans, and help promote financial literacy for students and their parents.

This legislation will help streamline the Free Application for Federal Student Aid, FAFSA, and encourage the Department of Education to coordinate with the IRS to use information that the Government already has. It as well expands the access for low-income families to student aid with an easy to use two-page FAFSA-EZ form. Additionally, the bill strengthens the TRIO and GEAR UP college readiness programs for first-generation and low-income students.

One of the complaints I hear most from students and their parents is about the ever-increasing cost of college textbooks. This bill will help make textbook costs more manageable

by ensuring students know the price of textbooks in advance so they can plan for the expense. And it requires colleges and faculty members to have access to the textbook costs when making selections for their courses.

The bill also builds on our work to restore the full benefits of the GI Bill to our Nation's veterans, by creating a new scholarship program for active duty military personnel and family members. It also establishes support centers to help veterans succeed in college and ensures fairness for veterans in student aid decisions.

I am pleased that this bill will help colleges recruit, retain, and graduate students with disabilities. The legislation will also help colleges improve their facilities and educational materials for these students. Further, it will establish a national center to provide support services and best practices to colleges to best serve students with disabilities and their families.

The legislation also responds to the tragedy at Virginia Tech by helping colleges to develop and implement state-of-the-art emergency systems and campus safety plans. Following a recommendation from college campus safety directors, the bill creates a National Center for Campus Safety to work in collaboration with the COPS program.

The bill also contains provisions, which I wrote into the measure, to strengthen our workforce and our Nation's competitiveness.

The bill would implement my initiative to provide loan forgiveness for STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) employees who work in those fields. My initiative also establishes a loan forgiveness program for foreign language specialists who work as teachers or Government employees.

The legislation creates a Deputy Assistant Secretary for International and Foreign Language Education in the Department of Education. Based on legislation that I wrote, the executive-level officer would provide leadership in directing efforts aimed at international and foreign language education.

The measure establishes a program that I championed, the Science and Technology Advanced Foreign Language Grants program, to award funding to institutions of higher education to create programs that encourage students to develop foreign language proficiency as well as science and technological knowledge.

Based on my work, the bill develops the Mathematics & Science Scholars Program to grants and loan forgiveness to math and science students who commit to 5 consecutive years of service in a math or science field after graduation.

Included in the bill is my legislation to establish a National STEM Database to provide students with information on financial assistance for postsecondary and graduate programs in science, technology, engineering and mathematics. This important database will help capable students who are interested in STEM careers find scholarships to support their studies.

I am pleased that the measure includes the "Preparing Teachers for Digital Age Learners" program to help teacher candidates effectively integrate technology in the classroom. The program, which I advocated for, would work

with teaching candidates on how they can bring modern digital tools in the classroom.

Additionally, the bill incorporates my legislation, the Nursing School Capacity Act, which requires the Institute of Medicine to explore the constraints that the Nation's schools of nursing face and propose short and long term solutions to address the nursing crisis.

Finally, based on my efforts the bill improves The "Child Care Access Means Parents in Schools" Program to empower small and community colleges to provide child care to working mothers so they can attend school.

Each of these provisions and the many more contained in the final Act will have positive impacts on our Nation and I am pleased that they soon will be implemented into law.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the previous question is ordered on the conference report.

There was no objection.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the conference report.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, this 15-minute vote on adopting the conference report will be followed by 5-minute votes on approving the Journal, if ordered; ordering the previous question on H. Res. 1388; adopting H. Res. 1388, if ordered; ordering the previous question on H. Res. 1384; and adopting H. Res. 1384, if ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 380, nays 49, not voting 5, as follows:

[Roll No. 544]

YEAS—380

Abercrombie	Boyd (FL)	Conyers	Edwards (TX)	LaTourette	Rogers (MI)
Ackerman	Boyda (KS)	Cooper	Ehlers	Latta	Ros-Lehtinen
Aderholt	Brady (PA)	Costa	Ellison	Lee	Roskam
Alexander	Braley (IA)	Costello	Ellsworth	Levin	Ross
Allen	Brown (SC)	Courtney	Emanuel	Lewis (CA)	Rothman
Altmire	Brown, Corrine	Cramer	Emerson	Lewis (GA)	Roybal-Allard
Andrews	Buchanan	Crenshaw	Engel	Lewis (KY)	Royce
Arcuri	Butterfield	Crowley	English (PA)	LoBiondo	Ruppersberger
Baca	Buyer	Cuellar	Eshoo	Loeb	Rush
Bachmann	Calvert	Culberson	Etheridge	Loeb	Ryan (OH)
Bachus	Camp (MI)	Cummings	Everett	Lowey	Salazar
Baird	Capito	Davis (AL)	Fallin	Lucas	Sánchez, Linda T.
Baldwin	Capps	Davis (CA)	Farr	Lynch	Sanchez, Loretta
Barrow	Capuano	Davis (IL)	Fattah	Mahoney (FL)	Sarbanes
Barton (TX)	Cardoza	Davis (KY)	Feeney	Maloney (NY)	Saxton
Bean	Carmahan	Davis, David	Ferguson	Manzullo	Scalise
Becerra	Carney	Davis, Lincoln	Filner	Markey	Schakowsky
Berkley	Carson	Davis, Tom	Forbes	Marshall	Schiff
Berman	Carter	DeFazio	Fortenberry	Matheson	Schmitt
Berry	Castle	DeGette	Fossella	Matsui	Schwartz
Biggert	Castor	Delahunt	Foster	McCarthy (CA)	Scott (GA)
Bilbray	Cazayoux	DeLauro	Frank (MA)	McCarthy (NY)	Scott (VA)
Bilirakis	Chabot	Dent	Frelinghuysen	McCaul (TX)	Serrano
Bishop (GA)	Chandler	Diaz-Balart, L.	Gallegly	McCollum (MN)	Sessions
Bishop (NY)	Childers	Diaz-Balart, M.	Gerlach	McCotter	Sestak
Blumenauer	Clarke	Dicks	Giffords	McCrery	Shays
Bonner	Clay	Dingell	Gilchrest	McDermott	Shea-Porter
Bono Mack	Cleaver	Doggett	Gillibrand	McGovern	Sherman
Boozman	Clyburn	Donnelly	Gohmert	McHugh	Shimkus
Boren	Coble	Doyle	Gonzalez	McIntyre	Shuler
Boswell	Cohen	Drake	Goode	McKeon	Shuster
Boucher	Cole (OK)	Dreier	Goodlatte	McMorris	Simpson
Boustany	Conaway	Edwards (MD)	Gordon	Rodgers	Sires
			Granger	McNerney	Skelton
			Graves	McNulty	Slaughter
			Green, Al	Meeke (FL)	Smith (NE)
			Green, Gene	Meeks (NY)	Smith (NJ)
			Grijalva	Melancon	Smith (TX)
			Gutierrez	Mica	Smith (WA)
			Hall (NY)	Michaud	Snyder
			Hall (TX)	Miller (MI)	Solis
			Hare	Miller (NC)	Souder
			Harman	Miller, Gary	Space
			Hastings (FL)	Miller, George	Speier
			Hastings (WA)	Mitchell	Spratt
			Hayes	Mollohan	Stark
			Heller	Moore (KS)	Stearns
			Herseth Sandlin	Moore (WI)	Stupak
			Higgins	Moran (VA)	Sullivan
			Hill	Murphy (CT)	Sutton
			Hinchee	Murphy, Patrick	Tanner
			Hinojosa	Murphy, Tim	Tauscher
			Hirono	Murtha	Taylor
			Hobson	Musgrave	Terry
			Hodes	Myrick	Thompson (CA)
			Holden	Nadler	Thompson (MS)
			Holt	Napolitano	Thornberry
			Honda	Neal (MA)	Tiahrt
			Hooley	Neugebauer	Tiberi
			Hoyer	Nunes	Tierney
			Hunter	Oberstar	Towns
			Inglis (SC)	Obey	Tsongas
			Inslee	Oliver	Turner
			Israel	Ortiz	Udall (CO)
			Issa	Pallone	Udall (NM)
			Jackson (IL)	Pascrell	Upton
			Jackson-Lee	Pastor	Van Hollen
			(TX)	Payne	Velázquez
			Jefferson	Pearce	Visclosky
			Johnson (GA)	Perlmutter	Walberg
			Johnson (IL)	Peterson (MN)	Walden (OR)
			Johnson, E. B.	Peterson (PA)	Walsh (NY)
			Jones (NC)	Petri	Walz (MN)
			Jones (OH)	Pickering	Wamp
			Kagan	Pitts	Wasserman
			Kanjorski	Platts	Schultz
			Kaptur	Pomeroy	Porter
			Keller	Price (NC)	Watson
			Kennedy	Pryce (OH)	Watt
			Kildee	Putnam	Waxman
			Kilpatrick	Radanovich	Weiner
			Kind	Rahall	Welch (VT)
			King (NY)	Ramstad	Weller
			Kirk	Rangel	Wexler
			Klein (FL)	Regula	Whitfield (KY)
			Kline (MN)	Rehberg	Wilson (NM)
			Knollenberg	Reichert	Wilson (OH)
			Kucinich	Renzi	Wilson (SC)
			Kuhl (NY)	Reyes	Wittman (VA)
			LaHood	Reynolds	Wolf
			Lampson	Richardson	Woolsey
			Langevin	Rodriguez	Wu
			Larsen (WA)	Rogers (AL)	Yarmuth
			Larson (CT)	Rogers (KY)	Young (FL)
			Latham		

NAYS—49

Akin
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Deal (GA)
Doolittle
Duncan

Flake
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Garrett (NJ)
Gingrey
Hensarling
Herger
Hoekstra
Johnson, Sam
Jordan
King (IA)
Kingston
Lamborn
Linder
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Mack

Marchant
McHenry
Miller (FL)
Moran (KS)
Paul
Pence
Poe
Price (GA)
Rohrabacher
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Sensenbrenner
Shadegg
Tancredo
Weldon (FL)
Westmoreland

NOT VOTING—5

Brown-Waite,
Ginny

Cubin
Hulshof

Lipinski
Young (AK)

□ 1452

Messrs. AKIN, LINDER and WEST-MORELAND changed their vote from "yea" to "nay."

Mrs. MUSGRAVE, Messrs. BONNER, BACHUS, POMEROY and ROGERS of Alabama changed their vote from "nay" to "yea."

So the conference report was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the question on agreeing to the Speaker's approval of the Journal, which the Chair will put de novo.

The question is on the Speaker's approval of the Journal.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 223, noes 203, not voting 8, as follows:

[Roll No. 545]

AYES—223

Abercrombie
Ackerman
Allen
Andrews
Arcuri
Baca
Baird
Baldwin
Barrow
Bean
Becerra
Berkley
Berman
Berry
Bishop (GA)
Bishop (NY)
Blumenauer
Boren
Boswell
Boucher

Boyd (FL)
Boyda (KS)
Brady (PA)
Braley (IA)
Brown, Corrine
Butterfield
Capps
Capuano
Cardoza
Carnahan
Carson
Castor
Chandler
Childers
Clarke
Clay
Clever
Clyburn
Cohen
Conyers

Cooper
Costa
Costello
Courtney
Cramer
Crowley
Cuellar
Cummings
Davis (AL)
Davis (CA)
Davis (IL)
Davis, Lincoln
DeFazio
DeGette
Delahunt
DeLauro
Dicks
Dingell
Doggett
Donnelly

Doyle
Edwards (MD)
Ellison
Ellsworth
Emanuel
Engel
Eshoo
Etheridge
Farr
Fattah
Filner
Foster
Frank (MA)
Giffords
Gillibrand
Gonzalez
Gordon
Green, Al
Green, Gene
Grijalva
Gutierrez
Hall (NY)
Hare
Harman
Hastings (FL)
Herseth Sandlin
Higgins
Hill
Hinchev
Hinojosa
Hirono
Hodes
Holden
Holt
Hooley
Hoyer
Inlee
Israel
Jackson (IL)
Jackson-Lee
(TX)
Jefferson
Johnson (GA)
Johnson, E. B.
Jones (OH)
Kagen
Kanjorski
Kaptur
Kennedy
Kildee
Kilpatrick
Kind
Klein (FL)
Kucinich
Langevin
Larsen (WA)

Larson (CT)
Lee
Levin
Lewis (GA)
Loebsack
Lofgren, Zoe
Lowey
Lynch
Mahoney (FL)
Maloney (NY)
Markey
Marshall
Matheson
Matsui
McCarthy (NY)
McCollum (MN)
McDermott
McGovern
McIntyre
McNerney
McNulty
Meek (FL)
Meeks (NY)
Melancon
Michaud
Miller (NC)
Miller, George
Mollohan
Moore (KS)
Moore (WI)
Moran (VA)
Murphy (CT)
Murtha
Nadler
Napolitano
Neal (MA)
Oberstar
Obey
Olver
Ortiz
Pallone
Pascrell
Pastor
Payne
Perlmutter
Pomeroy
Price (NC)
Rahall
Rangel
Reyes
Richardson
Rodriguez
Ross
Rothman
Roybal-Allard
Ruppersberger

Rush
Ryan (OH)
Salazar
Sánchez, Linda
T.
Sanchez, Loretta
Sarbanes
Schakowsky
Schiff
Schwartz
Scott (GA)
Scott (VA)
Serrano
Sestak
Shea-Porter
Sherman
Shuler
Sires
Skelton
Slaughter
Smith (WA)
Snyder
Solis
Space
Speier
Spratt
Stark
Sutton
Tanner
Tauscher
Taylor
Thompson (MS)
Tierney
Towns
Tsongas
Udall (CO)
Udall (NM)
Olver
Van Hollen
Velázquez
Visclosky
Walz (MN)
Wasserman
Schultz
Waters
Watson
Watt
Waxman
Weiner
Welch (VT)
Wexler
Wilson (OH)
Woolsey
Wu
Yarmuth

NOES—203

Aderholt
Akin
Alexander
Altmire
Bachmann
Bachus
Barrett (SC)
Bartlett (MD)
Barton (TX)
Biggart
Billray
Bilirakis
Bishop (UT)
Blackburn
Blunt
Boehner
Bonner
Bono Mack
Boozman
Boustany
Brady (TX)
Broun (GA)
Brown (SC)
Buchanan
Burgess
Burton (IN)
Buyer
Calvert
Camp (MI)
Campbell (CA)
Cannon
Cantor
Capito
Carney
Carter
Castle
Cazayoux

Chabot
Coble
Cole (OK)
Conaway
Crenshaw
Culberson
Davis (KY)
Davis, David
Davis, Tom
Deal (GA)
Dent
Diaz-Balart, L.
Diaz-Balart, M.
Doolittle
Drake
Dreier
Duncan
Ehlers
Emerson
English (KS)
Everett
Fallin
Feeney
Ferguson
Flake
Forbes
Fortenberry
Fossella
Foxy
Franks (AZ)
Frelinghuysen
Gallegly
Garrett (NJ)
Gerlach
Gilchrest
Gingrey
Gohmert

Goode
Goodlatte
Granger
Graves
Hall (TX)
Hastings (WA)
Hayes
Heller
Hensarling
Herger
Hobson
Hoekstra
Hunter
Inglis (SC)
Issa
Johnson (IL)
Johnson, Sam
Jones (NC)
Jordan
Keller
King (IA)
King (NY)
Kingston
Kirk
Kline (MN)
Knollenberg
Kuhl (NY)
LaHood
Lamborn
Lampson
Latham
LaTourette
Latta
Lewis (CA)
Lewis (KY)
Linder
LoBiondo

Lucas
Lungren, Daniel
E.
Mack
Manzullo
Marchant
McCarthy (CA)
McCaul (TX)
McCotter
McCrery
McHenry
McHugh
McKeon
McMorris
Rodgers
Mica
Miller (FL)
Miller (MI)
Miller, Gary
Mitchell
Moran (KS)
Murphy, Patrick
Murphy, Tim
Musgrave
Myrick
Neugebauer
Nunes
Paul
Pearce
Pence
Peterson (MN)
Peterson (PA)

Petri
Pickering
Pitts
Platts
Poe
Porter
Price (GA)
Pryce (OH)
Putnam
Radanovich
Ramstad
Regula
Rehberg
Reichert
Renzi
Reynolds
Rogers (AL)
Rogers (KY)
Rogers (MI)
Rohrabacher
Ros-Lehtinen
Roskam
Royce
Ryan (WI)
Sali
Saxton
Scalise
Schmidt
Sensenbrenner
Sessions
Shadegg
Shays

Shimkus
Shuster
Simpson
Smith (NE)
Smith (NJ)
Souder
Stearns
Stupak
Sullivan
Tancredo
Terry
Thompson (CA)
Thornberry
Tiahrt
Tiberi
Turner
Upton
Walberg
Walden (OR)
Walsh (NY)
Wamp
Weldon (FL)
Weller
Westmoreland
Whitfield (KY)
Wilson (NM)
Wilson (SC)
Wittman (VA)
Wolf
Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—8

Brown-Waite,
Ginny
Cubin

Edwards (TX)
Hulshof

Lipinski
Smith (TX)
Young (AK)

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (during the vote). There are 2 minutes remaining in this vote.

□ 1502

So the Journal was approved. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

QUESTION OF PERSONAL PRIVILEGE

Mr. RANGEL. Pursuant to clause 1 of rule IX, I rise to a point of personal privilege.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair has been made aware of a valid basis for the gentleman's point of personal privilege.

The gentleman from New York is recognized for 1 hour.

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I promise you, this will not take anywhere near 1 hour.

I was advised last night and assured this morning that the minority intended to bring up a resolution recommending that I be censured or that my conduct as reported in The New York Times would be declared that I was a discredit to this House.

There is no one in this House that is more thick-skinned than I am in terms of playing politics, but playing with someone's reputation, especially someone that has felt so honored to serve in this House, I really think goes a step beyond that.

In reading the allegations as to where my campaign headquarters was located or what the rent should have been, I have never felt more secure that I violated no law and no spirit of the law. But in order to make certain, to make certain that there is no cloud