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AMENDMENT TO H.R. 4137, AS REPORTED

OFFERED BY MR. SHULER OF NORTH CAROLINA

Information systems pilot program

After section 111 of the bill, insert the following new section (and redesignate the succeeding sections accordingly):

SEC. 112. STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INFORMATION SYSTEM PILOT PROGRAM.

Part C of title I (20 U.S.C. 1015) is further amended by adding after section 135 (as added by section 111 of this Act) the following new section:

"SEC. 136. STATE HIGHER EDUCATION INFORMATION SYSTEM PILOT PROGRAM.

"(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to carry out a pilot program to assist not more than 5 States to develop State-level postsecondary student data systems to—

"(1) improve the capacity of States and institutions of higher education to generate more comprehensive and comparable data, in order to develop better-informed educational policy at the State level and to evaluate the effectiveness of institutional per-

1 formance while protecting the confidentiality of stu-
2 dents' personally identifiable information; and
3 "(2) identify how to best minimize the data-re-
4 porting burden placed on institutions of higher edu-
5 cation, particularly smaller institutions, and to maxi-
6 mize and improve the information institutions re-
7 ceive from the data systems, in order to assist insti-
8 tutions in improving educational practice and post-
9 secondary outcomes.
10 "(b) DEFINITION OF ELIGIBLE ENTITY.—In this sec-
11 tion, the term 'eligible entity' means—
12 "(1) a State higher education system; or
13 "(2) a consortium of State higher education
14 systems, or a consortium of individual institutions of
15 higher education, that is broadly representative of
16 institutions in different sectors and geographic loca-
17 tions.
18 "(c) COMPETITIVE GRANTS.—
19 "(1) GRANTS AUTHORIZED.—The Secretary
20 shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to not
21 more than 5 eligible entities to enable the eligible en-
22 tities to—
23 "(A) design, test, and implement postsec-
24 ondary student data systems that provide the

1 maximum benefits to States, institutions of
2 higher education, and State policymakers; and
3 "(B) examine the costs and burdens in-
4 volved in implementing a State-level postsec-
5 ondary student data system.
6 "(2) DURATION.—A grant awarded under this
7 section shall be for a period of not more than 3
8 years.
9 "(d) APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS.—An eligible en-
10 tity desiring a grant under this section shall submit an
11 application to the Secretary at such time, in such manner,
12 and containing such information as the Secretary deter-
13 mines is necessary, including a description of—
14 "(1) how the eligible entity will ensure that stu-
15 dent privacy is protected and that individually iden-
16 tifiable information about students, the students'
17 achievements, and the students' families remains
18 confidential in accordance with the Family Edu-
19 cational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (20 U.S.C.
20 1232g); and
21 "(2) how the activities funded by the grant will
22 be supported after the 3-year grant period.
23 "(e) USE OF FUNDS.—A grant awarded under this
24 section shall be used to—

1 "(1) design, develop, and implement the compo-
2 nents of a comprehensive postsecondary student
3 data system with the capacity to transmit student
4 information within States;
5 "(2) improve the capacity of institutions of
6 higher education to analyze and use student data;
7 "(3) select and define common data elements,
8 data quality, and other elements that will enable the
9 data system to—
10 "(A) serve the needs of institutions of
11 higher education for institutional research and
12 improvement;
13 "(B) provide students and the students'
14 families with useful information for decision-
15 making about postsecondary education;
16 "(C) provide State policymakers with im-
17 proved information to monitor and guide efforts
18 to improve student outcomes and success in
19 higher education;
20 "(4) estimate costs and burdens at the institu-
21 tional level for reporting to the postsecondary stu-
22 dent data system; and
23 "(5) test the feasibility of protocols and stand-
24 ards for maintaining data privacy and data access.

1 "(f) EVALUATION; REPORTS.—Not later than 6
2 months after the end of the projects funded by grants
3 awarded under this section, the Secretary shall—
4 "(1) conduct a comprehensive evaluation of the
5 pilot program authorized by this section; and
6 "(2) report the Secretary's findings, as well as
7 recommendations regarding the implementation of
8 State-level postsecondary student data systems to
9 the authorizing committees.
10 "(g) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There
11 are authorized to be appropriated to carry out this section
12 such sums as may be necessary for fiscal year 2009 and
13 each of the 4 succeeding fiscal years.".