

The [Postsecondary Data Collaborative](#) (PostsecData) and the [National Skills Coalition](#), in cooperation with the undersigned organizations and individuals, applaud Senators Bill Cassidy, M.D. (R-LA), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), Roger Marshall, M.D. (R-KS), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI), Chuck Grassley (R-IA) and John Hickenlooper (D-CO), and Representatives Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), Joe Wilson (R-SC), Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR), Nancy Mace (R-SC), and Mikie Sherrill (D-NJ) for championing transparency through their introduction of the College Transparency Act, which would create a secure, privacy-protected postsecondary data network. During the 117th Congress, the U.S. House of Representatives passed the College Transparency Act (H.R. 2030) as an amendment to the America COMPETES Act of 2022 (H.R. 4521). This bipartisan, bicameral bill would help students and families, policymakers, institutions and employers to make informed decisions by providing more complete information about college access, success, costs, and outcomes. This information empowers students and families to make well-informed choices about their education, policymakers and institutions to craft evidence-based policies to help students succeed, and employers to navigate the talent pipeline they need to grow the economy. Without complete, representative data that counts all students, equity will be out of reach.

The research is abundantly clear: Investing in a college education pays off.¹ But while college is “worth it” on average, students, policymakers, institutions, and employers cannot answer crucial questions about which postsecondary programs provide an adequate return on investment for which students. Students and taxpayers have a right to know what they can expect in return for their college investment. Yet, existing policies prevent us from answering basic questions, such as:

- What are national completion rates for part-time and transfer students of color?
- How do college access, affordability, and completion vary by race, ethnicity, and income?
- How much do students borrow, and can they repay their loans?
- How many non-completers from a particular college never reenroll, and how many transfer to finish their degree at another institution?
- Which students go on to succeed in the workforce?

Answers to these questions would help students and families choose programs that demonstrate strong outcomes, while helping policymakers and educators implement policies and practices that help more students succeed. For the marketplace to function effectively, all these stakeholders need access to high-quality information that reflects all types of students and can look at outcomes across state lines. The federal government—with its access to existing data, including on employment and earnings—is uniquely positioned to compile that information, while reducing institutional reporting burdens.

The College Transparency Act:

- Overturns the ban on student-level data collection in the Higher Education Act;

¹ College Board, Education Pays 2016, <https://trends.collegeboard.org/sites/default/files/education-pays-2016-full-report.pdf>

- Creates a secure, privacy protected student-level data network within the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) using strong security standards and data governance protocols;
- Accurately reports on student outcomes including enrollment, completion and post-college success across colleges and programs;
- Leverages existing data at federal agencies and institutional data by matching a limited set of data to calculate aggregate information to answer questions critical to understanding and improving student success;
- Protects all students by limiting data disclosures, prohibiting the sale of data, penalizing illegal data use, protecting vulnerable students, prohibiting the use of the data for law enforcement, safeguarding personally identifiable information, and requiring notice to students and regular audits of the system;
- Streamlines burdensome federal reporting requirements for postsecondary institutions;
- Provides information disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and Pell Grant receipt status to identify inequities in students' success;
- Requires a user-friendly website to ensure the data are transparent, informative, and accessible for students, families, policymakers, and employers; and
- Feeds aggregate information back to states and institutions so they can develop and implement targeted, data-informed strategies aimed at supporting student success.

The College Transparency Act passed the House in the last Congress and represents broad consensus among students, colleges and universities, employers, and policymakers that a secure, privacy-protected postsecondary student data network is the only way to give students the information they need to make informed college choices. That is why we are coming together to urge Congress to pass this bill to provide accurate, timely, and high-quality aggregate data in a user-friendly, transparent way for students and families, policymakers, institutions and employers who have a right to know answers to key questions about student access and success.

Sincerely,

AAC&U

AccessLex Institute

AccuRounds

Achieve Atlanta

Achieving the Dream

ACT

Advance CTE

Advantage College Planning

American Association of Community Colleges

American Educational Research Association

American International College

American Mold Builders Association

AMT - The Association For Manufacturing Technology

Asian & Pacific Islander American Scholarship Fund

Aspen Institute College Excellence Program

Arnold Ventures

Association for Career and Technical Education

Association of American Universities

Association of Community College Trustees
Association of Public and Land-grant Universities
Atlanta Regional Workforce Development Board
Augustus F. Hawkins Foundation
Austin Chamber of Commerce
Board of Regents, State of Iowa
Boston Centerless
Bunker Hill Community College
Business Roundtable
California EDGE Coalition
Campaign for College Opportunity
Center for American Progress
Center for First-generation Student Success
Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP)
Chicago Jobs Council
Chiefs for Change
Cobb Chamber of Commerce
College Now Greater Cleveland
Colorado Center on Law and Policy
Community Foundation for Greater Atlanta
Complete College America, Inc.
Corporation for a Skilled Workforce
Dallas County Community College District
Data Quality Campaign
Deans for Impact
Democrats for Education Reform
District 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund
EducationQuest Foundation
Employee Choice Academy
EmployIndy
Enlisted Association of the National Guard
Excelencia in Education
Field Crest Care Center
Five Star Development, Inc.
Florida State University
Future of Privacy Forum
Forging Industry Association
George Washington Institute of Public Policy
Georgetown University Center on Education and the Workforce
Georgia Association for Career and Technical Education
Greater Philadelphia Healthcare Partnership
Greater Washington Community Foundation
HCM Strategists
Higher Learning Advocates
Holder Construction Company
Independent Educational Consultants Association (IECA)
Indiana Institute for Working Families
Institute for Academic Leadership
Institute for Higher Education Policy
Japanese American Citizens League
Jersey City Literacy Program

JEVS Human Services
Jewish Vocational and Career Counseling Service
Jewish Vocational Service, Boston
JMPDX LLC
Jobs for the Future (JFF)
JobTrain
Knowledge Alliance
LeaderQuest Holdings Inc.
Learn4Life
Louisiana Community & Technical College System
Louisiana State University
Manufacturer's Education and Training Alliance
MCCI Medical Group
Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges
Nashville Area Chamber of Commerce
NASPA - Student Affairs Administrators in Higher Education
National Association for College Admission Counseling
National Association of Student Financial Aid Administrators
National College Attainment Network
National Consumer Law Center (on behalf of its low income clients)
National Council for Workforce Education
National Higher Education Benchmarking Institute
National Skills Coalition
National Tooling and Machining Association
Naugatuck Adult Education
NCHEMS
Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education
New America
New Orleans Youth Alliance
New York Association of Training & Employment Professionals (NYATEP)
Nexus Research and Policy Center
North American Die Casting Association
Northern Essex Community College
Northwest WI Workforce Investment Board
Office of Student Government Relations, Cornell
Orleans Technical College
Policy Matters Ohio
Policy Planning Partners
Postsecondary Analytics
Precision Machined Products Association
Precision Metalforming Association
Princeton University
Pryor Education Insights
Public Advocacy for Kids (PAK)
Public Insight Data Corporation
Rebuilding America's Middle Class
Results for America
Scholarship America
Skills2Compete Colorado
Software & Information Industry Association
South Asian Fund For Education, Scholarship and Training (SAFEST)

Southeast Asia Resource Action Center (SEARAC)
Southwest Ohio Region Workforce Investment Board
State Higher Education Executive Officers Association
StriveTogether
Student Basic Needs Coalition - Nationals
Student Veterans of America
The Bell Policy Center
The Education Trust
The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS)
The Quality Assurance Commons for Higher and Postsecondary Education
The State University Of New York
The Veterans Education Project
Third Way
Towards Employment
TRC Staffing Services
University of Louisiana System
University of Massachusetts Amherst
University of Massachusetts (System)
University of Phoenix
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
U.S. Public Interest Research Group (PIRG)
uAspire
UnidosUS
United Way of Central Iowa
Veterans Education Success
Virginia Community College System
WKBJ Foundation
Women Employed
Workforce Solutions Group
WSP USA
Young Invincibles