IHEP Applauds the Inclusion of the Net Price Calculator Improvement Act as an Amendment to the College Affordability Act

Washington, DC (October 29, 2019) – This afternoon, Representative Lori Trahan (D-MA) offered the Net Price Calculator Improvement Act as an amendment to the College Affordability Act (CAA), and the House Committee on Education and Labor adopted it by voice vote. The Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP) applauds the inclusion of this amendment. IHEP Vice President of Policy Research, Mamie Voight, released the following statement:

“We would like to thank Representative Lori Trahan (D-MA) for proposing the bipartisan Net Price Calculator Improvement Act as an amendment to the College Affordability Act (CAA). We also thank Representative Brett Guthrie (R-KY) for voicing his support for this amendment, the late Representative Cummings (D-MD) for his leadership on the issue, and the House Committee on Education and Labor for adopting the amendment. The CAA makes important strides in promoting postsecondary affordability, transparency, and completion. However, as IHEP identified in our analysis, the original bill did not make much-needed improvements to net price calculators (NPCs). These calculators are critical cost comparison tools for students, but inconsistencies across schools’ calculators limit their utility. Through more explicit requirements about NPC data elements and labeling and by creating a universal NPC, this addition to the CAA will maximize NPCs’ utility for students, enhance transparency, and facilitate cost comparisons.

“IHEP has advocated for improvements to net price calculators as part of any comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act (HEA). The Net Price Calculator Improvement Act strengthens the CAA’s transparency provisions and we are glad to see it included in the bill.”