

College Transparency Act: S. 800 / H.R. 1766

Our existing postsecondary data systems are incomplete, duplicative, inefficient, and burdensome. Current law prohibits the federal government from collecting and reporting accurate data on student outcomes at each college and university in the U.S. Without this information, students and families are not empowered to make well-informed choices about their education, policymakers and institutions cannot craft evidence-based policies to help students succeed, and employers do not have the talent pipeline they need to grow the economy. Furthermore, current postsecondary data is incomplete and does not count all students.

The College Transparency Act:

- Overturns the ban on student-level data collection in the Higher Education Act
- 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 gender to identify inequities in students' success
- Requires a user-friendly website to ensure the data are transparent, informative, and accessible for students, parents, policymakers, and employers
- 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 represents broad consensus among students, colleges and universities, employers, and policymakers that a secure, privacy-protected postsecondary student data system is the only way to give students the information they need to make informed college choices. The bill has been supported by more than 165 organizations.

<http://www.ihep.org/press/opinions-and-statements/postsecddata-collaborative-and-national-skills-coalition-support>