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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1448 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY CUTLER, MILLARD, GREINER, PICKETT, B. MILLER,  
SOLOMON, HICKERNELL, JAMES, TOPPER, FEE, V. BROWN, KAUFFMAN,  
PEIFER, OBERLANDER, PHILLIPS-HILL, WARD, SAYLOR, ROEBUCK,  
HILL-EVANS AND ZIMMERMAN, MAY 25, 2017

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, MAY 25, 2017

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An  
2 act relating to the public school system, including certain  
3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial  
4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the  
5 laws relating thereto," providing for higher education  
6 accountability and transparency.

7 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
8 hereby enacts as follows:

9 Section 1. The act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known  
10 as the Public School Code of 1949, is amended by adding an  
11 article to read:

12 ARTICLE XX-H

13 HIGHER EDUCATION ACCOUNTABILITY

14 AND TRANSPARENCY

15 Section 2001-H. Definitions.

16 The following words and phrases when used in this article  
17 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
18 context clearly indicates otherwise:

19 "Department." The Department of Education of the

1 Commonwealth.

2 "Graduation rates." The percentages of full-time  
3 undergraduate students enrolled for credit toward a degree,  
4 diploma, certificate or other formal credential who are awarded  
5 a degree, diploma or certificate within each of the following:

6 (1) 100% of the normal completion time for the student's  
7 program.

8 (2) 125% of the normal completion time for the student's  
9 program.

10 (3) 150% of the normal completion time for the student's  
11 program.

12 "Institution of higher education." The term includes any of  
13 the following:

14 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A.

15 (2) A university within the State System of Higher  
16 Education.

17 (3) The Pennsylvania State University, the University of  
18 Pittsburgh, Temple University, Lincoln University or any  
19 other institution designated as State-related by the  
20 Commonwealth.

21 (4) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

22 (5) An institution of higher education which is operated  
23 not for profit, located in and incorporated or chartered by  
24 the Commonwealth and entitled to confer degrees as set forth  
25 in 24 Pa.C.S. § 6505 (relating to power to confer degrees)  
26 and is designated as a "college" or "university" as provided  
27 for by the standards and qualifications prescribed by the  
28 State Board of Education under 24 Pa.C.S. Ch. 65 (relating to  
29 private colleges, universities and seminaries).

30 (6) A private school licensed under the act of December

1 15, 1986 (P.L.1585, No.174), known as the Private Licensed  
2 Schools Act.

3 "Net tuition and fees." The average total cost of attendance  
4 minus the average amount of grant or scholarship aid awarded to  
5 a first-time, full-time undergraduate student enrolled for  
6 credit toward a degree, diploma, certificate or other formal  
7 credential from the Federal Government, the Commonwealth or the  
8 institution of higher education.

9 "PHEAA." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance  
10 Agency.

11 "Retention rate." The percentage of first-year, full-time  
12 undergraduate students enrolled for credit toward a degree,  
13 diploma, certificate or other formal credential who continue to  
14 be enrolled at an institution of higher education in the  
15 following school year.

16 "Total debt." The average per-student cumulative principal  
17 borrowed from a loan program, including Federal and State loan  
18 programs, institutional loans and private alternate loans made  
19 by a bank or lender.

20 Section 2002-H. Comparison tool.

21 (a) Duty of department.--The department shall make available  
22 on the department's publicly accessible Internet website a  
23 search tool that allows an individual to compare institutions of  
24 higher education that meet certain criteria selected by the  
25 individual, including the offering of a particular major or  
26 program of study.

27 (b) Requirements.--The comparison tool required under this  
28 section must:

29 (1) Be accessible from the department's publicly  
30 accessible Internet website.

1           (2) Allow a user to identify and compare institutions of  
2 higher education by the following:

3           (i) Programs of study available.  
4           (ii) Name.  
5           (iii) Physical address.  
6           (iv) Total enrollment for the previous academic  
7 year.  
8           (v) Net tuition and fees per year based on the  
9 previous academic year.  
10          (vi) Percentages of students receiving:  
11           (A) Pell grants.  
12           (B) Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity  
13 grants.  
14           (C) Academic Competitiveness grants.  
15           (D) National Science and Mathematics Access to  
16 Retain Talent grants.  
17           (E) Teacher Education Assistance for College and  
18 Higher Education grants.  
19          (vii) Average total debt borrowed for undergraduate  
20 study.  
21          (viii) Graduation and retention rates, including  
22 information on average time, in years, to attainment of a  
23 degree, diploma, certificate or other formal credential  
24 for a full-time student.  
25          (ix) Percentage of undergraduate students who have  
26 defaulted on their Federal student loans within three  
27 years of entering repayment.

28          (3) Be accessible to the public without requiring  
29 registration or use of a user name, password or other user  
30 identification.

1       (4) Include a link to the publicly accessible Internet  
2 website of the Department of Labor and Industry and a link to  
3 the publicly accessible Internet website of each of the  
4 institutions of higher education selected.

5       (5) Include a direct link to the High Priority  
6 Occupations publicly accessible Internet website of the  
7 Department of Labor and Industry with a description of what  
8 high priority occupations are and how they are identified.

9       (c) Chart.--The comparison tool required under this section  
10 must generate a comparison chart in a grid format that:

11       (1) Lists the institutions of higher education that  
12 match a user's search criteria.

13       (2) Provides information for each institution of higher  
14 education listed as outlined in subsection (b) (2).

15       (d) Duty of institutions.--Each institution of higher  
16 education shall provide the information listed in this section,  
17 as available, to the department not later than January 1 of each  
18 year. If the information required under this subsection is  
19 available in an institution of higher education's Integrated  
20 Postsecondary Education Data System report, the institution of  
21 higher education may comply with the reporting requirements of  
22 this subsection by sending an electronic copy of the Integrated  
23 Postsecondary Education Data System report to the department.  
24 The department shall update the comparison tool as soon as  
25 practicable after receiving information from each institution of  
26 higher education.

27       (e) The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency  
28 shall include a link on its publicly accessible Internet website  
29 to the comparison tool required under this section.

30       Section 2. This act shall take effect in 60 days.