

Sec. 237. The Committee includes a new provision directing the Secretary to report the death of any unaccompanied child in HHS custody to the Committee within 24 hours.

Sec. 238. The Committee includes a new provision requiring the Secretary to submit a detailed spend plan outlining anticipated uses of funds in the Refugee and Entrant Assistance account.

Sec. 239. The Committee continues a provision related to primary and secondary school costs for eligible dependents of HHS personnel stationed in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, and the possessions of the United States.

Sec. 240. The Committee includes a new provision related to facilities at CDC.

Sec. 241. The Committee modifies a provision relating to the Nonrecurring Expenses Fund.

Sec. 242. The Committee includes a new provision related to the period of availability of multiyear research grants if the Director of the NIH determines the project suffered an interruption of activities attributable to COVID-19.

Sec. 243. The Committee includes a new provision requiring the Secretary to report on the current inventory of the Strategic National Stockpile.

Sec. 244. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting funds from being used to implement, enforce, or give effect to a rule related to conscience rights.

Sec. 245. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting funds from being used to implement, enforce, or otherwise give effect to a rule related to nondiscrimination in health and health education programs or activities.

Sec. 246. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting funds from being used to publish a proposed rule relating to a non-emergency medical transportation benefit for Medicaid beneficiaries.

Sec. 247. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting funds from being used to implement, enforce, or otherwise give effect to a rule related to reassignment of Medicaid provider claims.

Sec. 248. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting funds for foster care programs from being awarded to an organization that excludes an individual based on non-merit factors such as age, disability, sex, race, color, national origin, religion, gender identity, or sexual orientation, or that refuses to treat as valid the marriages of same-sex couples in accordance with the Supreme Court decisions *United States v. Windsor* and *Obergefell v. Hodges*.

Sec. 249. The Committee includes a new provision prohibiting CMS from relocating its call center operations until the Government Accountability Office has submitted an evaluation of relocation options.

TITLE III—DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

IMPROVING ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	---
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	\$19,363,430,000
Committee Recommendation .....	---
Change from enacted level .....	---
Change from budget request .....	- 19,363,430,000

The Committee rejects the fiscal year 2021 budget request for a new Elementary and Secondary Education Block Grant.

EDUCATION FOR THE DISADVANTAGED

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$16,996,790,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	-----
Committee Recommendation .....	17,258,290,000
Change from enacted level .....	+261,500,000
Change from budget request .....	+17,258,290,000

This account provides foundational funding to help ensure all children receive a fair, equitable and high-quality education.

Of the total amount available, \$6,336,990,000 is appropriated for fiscal year 2021 for obligation on or after July 1, 2022 and \$10,841,177,000 is appropriated for fiscal year 2021 for obligation on or after October 1, 2022.

*Grants to Local Educational Agencies*

For fiscal year 2021, the Committee recommends \$16,563,802,000 for Title I grants to LEAs, an increase of \$254,000,000 over the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposed to eliminate this program. Title I is the cornerstone of federal K–12 education programs and critical to the nation’s collective efforts to ensure that every child has the opportunity to obtain a high-quality education. The program serves an estimated 25 million students in nearly 90 percent of school districts and nearly 60 percent of all public schools. Providing additional resources so that children can succeed in school and in life is one of the Committee’s highest priorities in the bill.

Of the amounts provided for Title I programs, \$6,459,401,000 is available for Basic Grants to Local Educational Agencies (LEAs or school districts), which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. Basic grants are awarded to school districts with at least 10 low-income children who make up more than two percent of the school-age population.

Within the amount for Title I Basic Grants, up to \$5,000,000 is made available to the Secretary of Education (Secretary) on October 1, 2020, to obtain annually-updated LEA-level poverty data from the Bureau of the Census.

The Committee recommends \$1,362,301,000 for Title I Concentration Grants, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. Concentration Grants target funds to school districts in which the number of low-income children exceeds 6,500 or 15 percent of the total school-age population.

The Committee recommends \$4,371,050,000 for Title I Targeted Grants, which is \$127,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. Targeted Grants provide higher payments to school districts with high numbers or percentages of low-income students.

The Committee recommends \$4,371,050,000 for Title I Education Finance Incentive Grants (EFIGs), which is \$127,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. EFIGs provide payments to States and school districts that incorporate equity and effort factors to improve the equity of State funding systems.

The Committee urges that the Department support LEAs’ development of plans under section 1112(b)(6) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) that describe the amount of funds

for homeless students reserved under section 1113(c)(3)(A) of the ESEA, how such amount was determined, and the amount of the prior year's reservation that was spent on homeless students. The Committee further urges that the Department support SEAs' development of plans under section 1111(g)(1)(F) of the ESEA that describe how the SEA will monitor the amount and use of funds reserved for homeless students under section 1113(c)(3)(A) and provide technical assistance to assist LEAs in effectively using such funds to support homeless students.

The Committee believes that all students should be able to access texts that reflect their interests and diverse cultures. Unfortunately, too many Black, Latino, Asian-American, and Native students are unable to access such books and printed materials in their classrooms and school libraries. To address this challenge, the Committee supports classroom and school libraries that seek to include content that reflects the history and diversity of their student populations.

The Committee supports efforts by State and school district leaders to improve student learning environments by prioritizing rigorous culturally and linguistically responsive education (CLRE). Such efforts not only prioritize an emphasis on the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations in academic curricula, but also help students confront racism and prejudice in common discussions of literature and history. The Committee notes that rigorous CLRE and anti-racist education can support critical thinking skills, feelings of student belonging, and student social and emotional well-being.

The Committee is concerned with and opposes proposals from the Administration that divert public education funding to private school voucher programs and that block-grants ESEA funds while eliminating vital resources such as Title I grants to LEAs.

The Committee notes that the ESEA recognizes military-connected students as a distinct subgroup of students. More than 80 percent of military-connected children attend public schools. Students with parents/guardians who serve full-time in the military move and change schools frequently. In addition, they may experience trauma resulting from separations from a parent/guardian due to their parents' service to the U.S. Military. The Military Student Identifier provides educators, school leaders, and policymakers with critical information to personalize attention and direct resources to better support military dependent children. Current law directs the Military Student Identifier toward the children of active duty families, leaving out the nearly one-half million children of the reserve component, both National Guard and Reserves. The Committee supports efforts to address the unique needs of children whose parents/guardians serve in the National Guard and reserve components.

The Committee encourages the Department to provide technical assistance and support to State and local educational agencies in implementing evidence-based strategies for improving schools identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement under Title I. In particular, the Committee notes the importance of principals and other school leaders in bringing about improvements in student achievement and other outcomes. Research shows there are virtually no documented instances of low-performing schools

being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. Demonstrated effects of successful leadership are considerably greater in schools that are in more difficult circumstances. Additionally, research has found that school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning, and 97 percent of teachers say that the principal is responsible for determining if a school can attract and retain great teachers. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Department to provide technical assistance to States and school districts on strengthening school leadership as a mechanism for improving results in low-performing schools, particularly those identified for comprehensive and targeted support and improvement within the State's accountability system. The Committee directs the Department to respond to this request in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

The CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$30,750,000,000 for the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus, including \$153,750,000 for the Outlying Areas and \$153,750,000 for the Bureau of Indian Education. The ESF included \$13,500,000,000 in funding for elementary and secondary emergency relief and \$3,000,000,000 in funding to governors for elementary, secondary, and postsecondary emergency relief.

#### *Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants*

The Committee recommends \$192,000,000 for Comprehensive Literacy Development Grants, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are awarded to States to subgrant to school districts and/or early education programs to improve literacy instruction for disadvantaged students.

#### *Innovative Approaches to Literacy*

The Committee recommends \$28,500,000 for Innovative Approaches to Literacy, which is \$1,500,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds support competitive grants to school libraries and national not-for-profit organizations to provide books and literacy activities to children and families in high-need communities.

The Committee directs the Department to prioritize in the fiscal year 2021 competition underserved communities in urban school districts in which students from low-income families make up at least 50 percent of enrollment.

#### *State Agency Programs: Migrant*

The Committee recommends \$378,501,000 for the State Agency Program for Migrant Education, which is \$3,750,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 request proposes to eliminate this program. This program supports special educational and related services for children of migrant agricultural workers and fishermen, including: (1) supplementary academic education; (2) remedial or compensatory instruction; (3) English for limited English proficient students; (4) testing; (5) guidance counseling; and (6) other activities to promote coordination of services

across States for migrant children whose education is interrupted by frequent moves.

*State Agency Programs: Neglected and Delinquent*

For the State Agency Program for Neglected and Delinquent Children, the Committee recommends \$48,864,000, which is \$1,250,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 request proposes to eliminate this program. This formula grant program supports educational services for children and youth under age 21 in State-run institutions, attending community day programs, and in correctional facilities. A portion of these funds is provided for projects that support the successful re-entry of youth from the criminal justice system into postsecondary and vocational programs.

*Special Programs for Migrant Students*

The Committee recommends \$46,623,000 for the Special Programs for Migrant Students, which is \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 request proposes to eliminate this program. These programs make grants to colleges, universities, and nonprofit organizations to support educational programs designed for students who are engaged in migrant and other seasonal farm work. The High School Equivalency Program (HEP) recruits migrant students age 16 and over and provides academic and support services to help those students obtain a high school equivalency certificate and subsequently to gain employment or admission to a postsecondary institution or training program. The College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP) provides tutoring and counseling services to first-year, undergraduate migrant students and assists those students in obtaining student financial aid for their remaining undergraduate years.

IMPACT AID

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$1,486,112,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	1,410,799,000
Committee Recommendation .....	1,491,112,000
Change from enacted level .....	+5,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+80,313,000

This account supports payments to school districts affected by Federal activities, such as those that educate children whose families are connected with the military or who live on Indian land.

*Basic Support Payments*

The Committee recommends \$1,345,242,000 for Basic Support Payments to LEAs, which is \$5,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Basic Support Payments compensate school districts for lost tax revenue and are made on behalf of Federally-connected children, such as children of members of the uniformed services who live on Federal property.

The reporting method used to calculate the amount of Impact Aid a school receives is critical to ensuring accurate data for eligible communities. Correct student counts ensure adequate resources are provided for students. The Committee requests the Department assess any potential challenges with under reporting of eligible stu-

dents and develop recommendations for addressing such challenges. The result of such assessment is requested in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Payments for Children with Disabilities*

The Committee recommends \$48,316,000 for Payments for Children with Disabilities, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These payments compensate school districts for the increased costs of serving Federally-connected children with disabilities.

*Facilities Maintenance*

The Committee recommends \$4,835,000 for Facilities Maintenance, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These capital payments are authorized for maintenance of certain facilities owned by the Department.

*Construction*

The Committee recommends \$17,406,000 for the Construction program, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Funding is allocated by formula to eligible LEAs for school construction activities under section 7007(b) of ESEA.

*Payments for Federal Property*

The Committee recommends \$75,313,000 for Payments for Federal Property, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are awarded to school districts to compensate for lost tax revenue as the result of Federal acquisition of real property since 1938.

SCHOOL IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$5,404,967,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	392,374,000
Committee Recommendation .....	5,453,617,000
Change from enacted level .....	+48,650,000
Change from budget request .....	+5,061,243,000

The Committee recommendation includes \$5,453,617,000 for the School Improvement Programs account.

*Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$2,154,330,000 for Supporting Effective Instruction State Grants (Title II–A), which is \$22,500,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate the program. Title II–A grants provide States and school districts with a flexible source of funding to strengthen the skills and knowledge of teachers, principals, and administrators to enable them to improve student achievement.

The Committee is supportive of efforts to strengthen school leadership through the Title II–A program. Research has consistently demonstrated that school leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning, and 97 percent of teachers say that the principal is responsible for determining if a

school can attract and retain great teachers. The Committee particularly takes note of the fact that, under ESEA, States may reserve approximately three percent of their Title II–A formula allocations to carry out activities for principals and other school leaders and encourages States to make use of this optional reservation so as to maximize the impact of the Title II–A program. The Committee directs the Department to encourage, through guidance or technical assistance, SEAs to utilize the school leader three percent Title II–A set-aside to better drive school improvement efforts.

#### *Supplemental Education Grants*

The Committee recommends \$16,699,000 for Supplemental Education Grants to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The Compact of Free Association Amendments Act of 2003 (P.L. 108–188) authorizes these entities to receive funding for general education assistance.

#### *Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers*

The Committee recommends \$1,262,673,000 for Nita M. Lowey 21st Century Community Learning Centers, \$13,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2021 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are awarded by formula to States, which in turn distribute funds on a competitive basis to local school districts, nonprofit organizations, and other public entities.

The Committee notes that only one in three 21st Century Community Learning Centers grant applications is awarded, reflecting substantial unmet demand for these opportunities. The \$13,000,000 increase over fiscal year 2020 will help communities providing afterschool programs serve 15,600 more students than in fiscal year 2020.

#### *State Assessments*

The Committee recommends \$378,000,000 for State Assessments, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$8,900,000 more than the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Funds are available to develop and implement academic standards and assessments. The program includes a set-aside for audits to identify and eliminate low-quality or duplicative assessments.

#### *Education for Homeless Children and Youth*

The Committee recommends \$102,650,000 for the Education for Homeless Children and Youth program, which is \$1,150,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Grants are allocated to States in proportion to the total each State receives under the Title I program.

#### *Training and Advisory Services*

The Committee recommends \$6,575,000 for Training and Advisory Services authorized by Title IV–A of the Civil Rights Act, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Title IV–A authorizes technical

assistance and training services for school districts to address problems associated with desegregation on the basis of race, sex, or national origin. The Department awards three-year grants to regional Equity Assistance Centers (EACs) located in each of the 10 Department of Education regions. The EACs provide services to school districts upon request. Typical activities include disseminating information on successful education practices and legal requirements related to nondiscrimination on the basis of race, sex, and national origin in educational programs.

#### *Education for Native Hawaiians*

The Committee recommends \$37,897,000 for the Education for Native Hawaiian program, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are used to provide competitive awards for supplemental education services to the Native Hawaiian population.

The Committee recognizes that teacher shortages and related issues of poor recruitment, attrition, and retention disproportionately impact rural, impoverished, and urban communities, including those regions with a high population of Native Hawaiian students. Stronger pathways are needed between the K–12 school system and postsecondary institutions to support Native Hawaiian education by recruiting more underrepresented students to become teachers, increasing production of teachers through teacher pre-service programs, providing work-related growth and advancement for educators, and supporting coordinated mentorship, coaching, and induction processes. The Committee encourages the Department to foster stronger educational pathways between the K–12 school system and postsecondary institutions to improve teacher recruitment, training, and retention in the area of Native Hawaiian education.

#### *Alaska Native Education Equity*

The Committee recommends \$35,953,000 for the Alaska Native Education Equity program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are used to provide competitive awards for supplemental education services to the Alaska Native population.

#### *Rural Education*

The Committee recommends \$186,840,000 for Rural Education programs, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. There are two dedicated programs to assist rural school districts with improving teaching and learning in their schools: the Small, Rural Schools Achievement program, which provides funds to rural districts that serve a small number of students; and the Rural and Low-Income Schools program, which provides funds to rural districts that serve concentrations of poor students, regardless of the number of students served by the district. Funds appropriated for Rural Education shall be divided equally between these two programs.

The Committee recognizes that the Rural Education Achievement Programs Rural and Low-Income School grant program has provided vital funding to rural schools across the country to ensure that regardless of geographic location, every child can have an effective and comprehensive education. Therefore, any changes to the administration of the Rural and Low-Income School grant program should give schools losing grant funding previously received from the program a sufficient amount of time and guidance to pursue supplementary funding not less than one year.

#### *Comprehensive Centers*

The Committee recommends \$52,000,000 for Comprehensive Centers, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. The Comprehensive Centers program includes support for regional centers that provide training, technical assistance, and professional development to build State capacity to provide high-quality education to all students. The Committee notes the critical role Comprehensive Centers play in helping States vet evidence and strategies to implement ESEA and provide children with a high-quality education.

#### *Student Support and Academic Enrichment State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$1,220,000,000 for Student Support and Academic Enrichment (SSAE) State Grants, which is \$10,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. SSAE grants provide SEAs and LEAs with flexible resources that provide students with access to a well-rounded education, including rigorous coursework, and improve school conditions and the use of technology.

The Committee encourages the Department to work with States and school districts that serve diverse youth to explore using SSAE funding to support and create youth pipeline programs in the arts and entertainment industries. The Committee is aware of programs that focus on closing student opportunity gaps by bringing filmmakers into Title I schools to partner with teachers to expand access to the arts, implement social and emotional learning strategies, and support rigorous academic curricula. A 2019 evaluation by the Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity found that such programs create a positive environment and learning community, promote active and social learning, provide in-depth instruction of vocabulary practices, and cultivate social and emotional learning competencies.

The Committee supports efforts by States and LEAs to increase diversity in accelerated student learning programs, such as advanced placement courses, gifted and talented classes and honors programs. The Committee supports the use of ESEA funding to create State or local equity offices. Equity offices could evaluate current data on the students enrolled in accelerated student learning programs and use such data to inform recommendations to LEAs on how to improve the diversity of those programs. The Committee recognizes that Black, Latino, and Native students, students living in poverty, and English Learners are historically underrepresented in accelerated learning programs. Research shows that developing

targeted recruitment and outreach plans, as well as universal screening for talented and gifted programs help address inequitable access that lock students out of opportunities that engage them more meaningfully in school and expand their postsecondary success.

The Committee is concerned about the high rates of students who are chronically absent from school. The most recent statistics show that over seven million students in the 2015–2016 school year were considered chronically absent. Studies have shown that chronic absenteeism hurts students' academic achievement and can lead to students dropping out of school. In the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification, the Committee directs the Department to describe State-driven efforts to combat chronic absenteeism. The Department's description can include relevant analysis such as which factors contribute most to student chronic absenteeism, and recommendations for Federal, State, and local strategies to prevent and address chronic absenteeism. The Committee is interested in chronic absenteeism trends by subgroups such as by gender, race, ethnicity, homeless, foster, English Learner status, and geography. The Committee urges the Department to make clear to State and local education agencies that they may leverage SSAE funding to address chronic absenteeism.

The Committee continues to note that SEAs and LEAs can use SSAE funds for activities that contribute to a well-rounded education, including supports for safe, culturally responsive classroom communities. The Committee also notes that SEAs and LEAs can use SSAE funds to support and expand school-based mental health services including but not limited to providing trauma-informed care and mindfulness meditation.

The Committee notes that States and school districts may use funds available under the SSAE grant program to strengthen instruction in science, technology, engineering, arts, and mathematics (STEAM) fields, including computer science, and improve access to Pre-K–12 computer science and STEAM programming for underserved students, such as minorities, girls, and youth from families living at or below the poverty line. The Committee recognizes that supporting education in the STEAM fields, particularly computer science, is critical to ensuring that our nation continues to lead in innovation. As computer science is a basic skill in the 21st century global economy, the Committee intends for investments in Title IV–A to reduce the computer science enrollment and achievement gaps.

The explanatory statement accompanying the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2020, directed the Department to include in the fiscal year 2021 Congressional Budget Justification information about the Department's plans for using the two percent set-aside for technical assistance and capacity building for supporting SEAs and LEAs in carrying out authorized activities under the SSAE program. The Committee notes the Department provided limited information in the fiscal year 2021 Congressional Budget Justification about some of its plans for fiscal year 2019 funds. However, the Department has not been fully transparent about its plans, nor has it been clear about how technical assistance and capacity building funds directly support the technical assistance and capacity building needs of SEAs and LEAs. In fact, the Department

has devoted approximately one-quarter of these funds for a new grant competition this year circumventing otherwise applicable rules regarding notice and comment procedures to support two to four grants to SEAs for course access programs that operate outside of LEAs and allow students to choose courses through State-identified course providers. Such a program does nothing to address the challenges SEAs identified in a study of SSAE released by the Department earlier this year but merely advances a privatization agenda.

The Committee directs the Department to include in its fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification and each subsequent Congressional Budget Justification information on current and planned expenditures for the two percent set-aside for technical assistance and capacity building, and include a plan for how resources will be spent to build the capacity of SEAs and LEAs and provide technical assistance. The plan should include how resources will be spent helping SEAs and LEAs vet evidence, implement evidence-based interventions, and incorporate evidence-based SSAE activities into school improvement strategies.

The Committee is supportive of SEA and LEA efforts to expand evidenced-based and scalable integrated student support systems by creating partnerships with existing school and community resources to deliver and track an individual tailored support plan for each student in a high-need school. The Committee notes that funds available under the SSAE grant program may be used to support such efforts, which can improve academic performance and graduation rates for students.

INDIAN EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$180,739,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	180,739,000
Committee Recommendation .....	181,239,000
Change from enacted level .....	+500,000
Change from budget request .....	+500,000

This account supports programs authorized by part A of title VI of the ESEA.

*Grants to Local Educational Agencies*

The Committee recommends \$105,381,000 for Grants to Local Educational Agencies, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program provides assistance through formula grants to school districts and schools supported or operated by the Bureau of Indian Education. The purpose of this program is to improve elementary and secondary school programs that serve American Indian students, including preschool children. Grantees must develop a comprehensive plan and ensure that the programs they carry out will help Indian students reach the same challenging standards that apply to all students. This program supplements the regular school program to help American Indian children sharpen their academic skills, bolster their self-confidence, and participate in enrichment activities that would otherwise be unavailable.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$153,750,000 for the Bureau of Indian Education to address the impact of COVID–19 on students.

*Special Programs for Indian Children*

The Committee recommends \$67,993,000 for Special Programs for Indian Children, which is the same as the fiscal year 2021 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These programs make competitive awards to improve the quality of education for American Indian students. The program also funds the American Indian Teacher Corps and the American Indian Administrator Corps to recruit and support American Indians as teachers and school administrators.

*National Activities*

The Committee recommends \$7,858,000 for National Activities, which is \$500,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The fiscal year 2021 increase to National Activities is directed to support the Department’s Native American language immersion grant program.

Within this account, funding is provided for grants to Tribes for education administrative planning, development, and coordination, grants to support Native language immersion schools and programs. Funds under this authority also support research, evaluation and data collection to provide information about the educational status of Indian students and the effectiveness of Indian education programs.

INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$1,103,815,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	-----
Committee Recommendation .....	1,074,815,000
Change from enacted level .....	- 29,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+1,074,815,000

The Committee recommends \$1,074,815,000 for programs within the Innovation and Improvement account.

*Education Innovation and Research*

The Committee recommends \$195,000,000 for the Education Innovation and Research (EIR) program, which is \$5,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program makes competitive grants to support the replication and scaling-up of evidence-based education innovations.

Within the total for EIR, the Committee recommendation includes \$110,000,000 to provide new grants for the initiative in social and emotional learning (SEL) interventions and provide evidence-based, field-initiated innovations that address student social, emotional, and cognitive needs. The recently released National Commission on Social, Emotional and Academic Development report chronicles decades of research showing “that the social, emotional, and cognitive dimensions of learning are deeply linked” and that educating the whole student involves integrating and sustaining these dimensions throughout the day. In addition, a recent study by the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning found that students who received SEL interventions showed lasting positive impacts on variables such as high school graduation rates and college attendance and lower likelihoods of being arrested or being diagnosed with a clinical mental health dis-

order. Further, RAND Corporation finds that there are at least 60 SEL interventions that have been evaluated and that meet the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) evidence requirements.

The Committee is encouraged by the robust, growing evidence base behind SEL strategies, trauma-informed services, and whole child approaches to learning, and makes funding for these interventions a top priority. Children across the country have been significantly impacted by disruptions related to COVID-19, including school closures. The increase to EIR in fiscal year 2021 is intended to address these concerns and provide additional support for the SEL initiative, which can include trauma-informed practices and services within schools.

Within 90 days of enactment of this Act, the Department is directed to brief the Committees on Appropriations on plans for carrying out the SEL competition. In addition, the Department shall provide notice to the Committees at least seven days before grantees are announced.

As part of the SEL initiative, the Committee encourages the Department to investigate opportunities to consider previous work done by the CDC and the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development who together helped develop an integrated model called Whole School, Whole Community, Whole Child. The Department is encouraged to consider how cross-sector research collaboration and evidence-informed practice among researchers can provide informed implementation guidance relevant to all stakeholders. Nurses, psychologists and associated workers can have an important role in supporting students' emotional health as well as their physical health in school settings, and the Department is encouraged to explore supporting opportunities to promote such collaborations.

In addition, within the total for EIR, the Committee recommendation includes \$85,000,000 for States, school districts, and school-based afterschool programs to provide or strengthen instruction in STEAM fields, including computer science. In particular, these funds must be used by the Secretary to direct additional Pre-K-12 computer science and STEAM grants to underrepresented students such as minorities, girls, and youth from families living at or below the poverty line to help reduce the enrollment and achievement gap. Supporting education in the STEAM fields, particularly computer science, is critical to ensure that our nation continues to lead in innovation. As computer science is a basic skill in the 21st century global economy, the Committee encourages the Department to support Pre-K-12 computer science education in schools across the country. Funds should also be used within these amounts to increase teacher training, proficiency, and knowledge of STEAM and computer science courses, with a particular interest in coding.

Given the significant Federal investment in the EIR program (and its predecessor program, Investing in Innovation), the Committee directs the Department to take stronger steps to publicly release and widely publicize the research findings from this critical program. More specifically, the Department should post research findings on its own website and issue related press releases and Dear Colleague letters. The Department should also provide summaries of the research findings to the Committees on Appropria-

tions. The Committee directs the Secretary to better showcase those programs that have demonstrated, through rigorous research as required by the ESEA, that their innovations show specific evidence of achievement in educational outcomes. The Department should also communicate any research findings that demonstrate successful outcomes to outside stakeholders, particularly chief State school officers and district superintendents. The Committee believes that publicizing these research findings will provide critical information for State governments, State and local education agencies, and others, particularly in unserved and underserved communities.

The Committee is aware that certain criteria for evaluating EIR grants, such as the use of randomized control trials, are more difficult for rural-based applicants to successfully fulfill. The Committee requests that the Department consider additional assistance for rural applicants in fulfilling evaluation requirements in future grant competitions.

The Committee is aware that the Department has excluded non-profit institutions of higher education from participation in grant opportunities depending on their category of eligibility for a tax exemption. The Committee encourages the participation of all non-profit institutions of higher education regardless of the category of its tax-exempt designation.

The Committee strongly opposes the Department's misguided efforts to fund EIR grants using its proposed Teacher-Directed Professional Learning Experiences priority. So much is already asked of our teachers who serve as instructional experts, counselors, and confidants for our nation's students. Asking teachers to navigate an uncharted, unregulated teacher professional development market is unreasonable and unwise. The Committee is concerned about the quality of the unvetted resources available to teachers online through popular websites. Reviewers in a recent Fordham Institute report found that most of these available materials are "mediocre" or "probably not worth using." A better approach would be providing school districts with resources to invest in high-quality, evidence-based professional development experiences. The EIR program is capable of doing so much more, and the Committee is disappointed to learn the Department is wasting taxpayer dollars on dubious approaches to teacher development.

#### *Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grants*

The Committee recommends \$200,000,000 for the Teacher and School Leader Incentive Grants program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program provides grants to States, school districts, and partnerships to develop, implement, improve, or expand human capital management systems or performance-based compensation systems in schools.

#### *American History and Civics Academies*

The Committee recommends \$2,315,000 for American History and Civics Academies, which is \$500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program.

*American History and Civics National Activities*

The Committee recommends \$3,500,000 for American History and Civics National Activities, which is \$500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program.

The Committee supports efforts by school districts that are home to populations of Latino students to ensure public schools reflect the diversity of their districts, which may extend to the naming of schools to highlight the achievements of Latinos.

*Supporting Effective Educator Development*

The Committee recommends \$80,000,000 for the Supporting Effective Educator Development (SEED) grant program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. SEED provides competitive grants to support alternative certification and other professional development and enrichment activities for teachers, principals, and other school leaders. Funds are included to fully support continuation costs for grants made in prior years.

The Committee is supportive of the Department's competitive preference priority for SEL in the fiscal year 2020 SEED competition and directs the Department to include the competitive preference priority in any new SEED competition in fiscal year 2021.

The Committee recognizes the positive impact SEL has on academic performance, classroom behavior, and student well-being. But studies have also shown that SEL school-based programs are more effective when they are supported by parent and family involvement. The Committee encourages the Department to support grantees that develop and implement teacher and school leader training programs on family engagement to increase the capacity of new and existing teachers and school leaders to work with families to collaboratively develop and support the social and emotional skills, habits, and mindsets of children. Efforts to promote family engagement could provide instruction of research-based, social and emotional skills, habits, and mindsets through locally relevant materials that increase the SEL competencies and capacities of teachers, school leaders, and families. Such efforts could also provide teacher and school leader training and professional development on strategies to engage families and collectively support the development of the social and emotional skills, habits, and mindsets of families.

Further, the Committee directs the Department to ensure that SEED grants are awarded to a diverse set of eligible entities, including national nonprofit organizations implementing evidence-based activities (as defined in section 8101(21)(A)(i) of the ESEA) across a number of sites which can help bring to scale evidence-based programs of national significance across the country.

In addition, the Committee encourages the Department, through the SEED program, to fund projects that increase the number of teachers with computer science certifications with a priority to increase the number of such teachers in rural public schools and public schools serving high percentages of Native students.

The Committee encourages the Department to ensure that SEED grants are awarded to a diverse set of eligible entities, including Historically Black Colleges and Universities and other Minority

Serving Institutions that have a focus on improving teacher diversity and educational outcomes in urban or underserved communities.

The Committee recognizes the vital role in preparing educators so that all students have access to high-quality STEM learning opportunities. The Committee further recognizes the value in a diverse STEM teacher pipeline and encourages efforts to increase women in STEM teacher positions.

The Committee supports improving civic education in the U.S. to ensure students understand the Declaration of Independence, the U.S. Constitution, the Bill of Rights, and other founding and foundational documents including the Emancipation Proclamation. The Committee is aware that teacher subject matter expertise is a factor in student achievement. Accordingly, within SEED, the Department is encouraged to support evidence-based professional development that helps elementary and secondary educators increase civic knowledge of principles included in the U.S.'s founding and foundational documents.

#### *Charter Schools Grants*

The Committee recommends \$400,000,000 for Charter School Program (CSP) Grants, which is \$40,000,000 below the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program.

CSP awards grants to SEAs or, if a State's SEA chooses not to participate, to charter school developers to support the development and initial implementation of public charter schools. State Facilities Incentive Grants and Credit Enhancement for Charter School Facilities awards help charter schools obtain adequate school facilities. These programs work in tandem to support the development and operation of charter schools.

The Committee requests GAO to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations on the Department's oversight over CSP and whether the program is being implemented effectively among grantees and subgrantees. The report should include an analysis of CSP grant amounts over time that supported charter schools, with a particular focus on schools that eventually closed or received funds but never opened; the relationships between charter schools supported by CSP grants and charter management organizations; and an analysis of enrollment patterns at these schools, especially for students with disabilities. The report should examine ways to improve the Department's oversight of CSP as well as make recommendations on potential legislative changes to the program that would reduce the potential for mismanagement and ineffective operations.

Further, the Committee supports efforts by the Department's Office of Inspector General (OIG) to examine grantee administration of Replication and Expansion Grants, including charter management organization grantees. The Committee also supports the OIG's efforts to evaluate whether the Department adequately monitored grantees' performance and uses of funds for CSP competitions.

*Magnet Schools Assistance*

The Committee recommends \$109,000,000 for the Magnet Schools Assistance program, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program makes competitive grants to support the establishment and operation of magnet schools that are a part of a court-ordered or Federally-approved voluntary desegregation plan.

The Committee encourages the Department to prioritize Magnet School Assistance applications that are paired with Department of Housing and Urban Development Choice Neighborhoods planning or implementation grants.

The Supreme Court's landmark 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education* declared separate but equal public schools to be unconstitutional. Yet, according to a 2016 GAO audit, public education is more segregated by race and class than at any time since 1960. The Committee is concerned by the resegregation of public schools and believes that the 2015 enactment of ESSA presents a valuable opportunity to support State and school district efforts to improve student diversity as a means of achieving equity of educational opportunity. Further, the evidence base in support of increasing student diversity as a means of school improvement is extensive, which is why the Committee continues to support the Magnet School Assistance program.

The Committee recognized a longstanding barrier to the implementation of this work in the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2019, when it removed two decades-old prohibitions on the use of Federal funds for transportation costs to carry out school desegregation efforts. However, the Committee recognizes that barriers to this work persist due to Section 426 of the General Education Provisions Act. It is concerning to the Committee that such legislative language has remained in place since 1974 as an obstacle when many school districts are working voluntarily to promote racial and economic integration for the benefit of their children and communities. Therefore, new bill language is included to rid the Federal code of this outdated prohibition.

*Ready to Learn Programming*

The Committee recommends \$30,000,000 for Ready to Learn Programming, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program supports the development and distribution of educational video programming for preschool and elementary school children and their parents, caregivers, and teachers.

*Arts in Education*

The Committee recommends \$31,000,000 for Arts in Education, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program provides competitive grants to support professional development and the development of instructional materials and programming that integrate the arts into the curricula.

*Javits Gifted and Talented Education*

The Committee recommends \$14,000,000 for the Javits Gifted and Talented Education Program, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funds are awarded through grants and contracts to States, schools districts, and other organizations to support a coordinated program of research, demonstration projects, innovative strategies, and other activities to help schools identify gifted and talented students and address their unique educational needs.

The Committee encourages the Department to use funds to increase the number of grants that assist schools in the identification of, and provision of services to, gifted and talented students who may not be identified and served through traditional assessment methods, such as children with disabilities, English learners, children of color, and economically disadvantaged students.

*Statewide Family Engagement*

Centers The Committee recommends \$10,000,000 for the Statewide Family Engagement Centers program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2020 budget request proposes to eliminate the program. Funds are awarded through grants to organizations to provide technical assistance and training to State and local educational agencies in the implementation and enhancement of systemic and effective family engagement policies, programs, and activities that lead to improvements in student development and academic achievement.

SAFE SCHOOLS AND CITIZENSHIP EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$210,000,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	---
Committee Recommendation .....	218,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	+8,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+218,000,000

The Committee recommends a total of \$218,000,000 for activities to promote safe schools, healthy students, and citizenship education, which is \$8,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$218,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

*Promise Neighborhoods*

The Committee recommends \$82,000,000 for Promise Neighborhoods, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Promise Neighborhoods supports grants to nonprofit, community-based organizations for the development of comprehensive neighborhood programs designed to combat the effects of poverty and improve educational outcomes for children and youth, from birth through college.

*School Safety National Activities*

The Committee recommends \$106,000,000 for School Safety National Activities, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. The Committee's recommendation provides

up to \$5,000,000 for the Project School Emergency Response to Violence (Project SERV) program.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$100,000,000 for Project SERV to help elementary and secondary schools and institutions of higher education respond to the immediate needs of COVID–19 and the effect on students.

Within School Safety National Activities, the Committee includes sufficient funding to continue the Mental Health Demonstration Grant and the Mental Health Personnel Grant competition, first initiated by the Committee in fiscal year 2020, to increase the number of well-trained school counselors, social workers, and psychologists, or other mental health professionals qualified to provide school-based mental health services.

The Project SERV program provides counseling and referral to mental health services as well as other education-related services to LEAs and IHEs in which the learning environment has been disrupted by a violent or traumatic crisis. The Committee directs the Department to report to the Committees on Appropriations within 180 days of enactment of this Act on how fiscal years 2017, 2018, 2019 and 2020 grant recipients used Project SERV funds; recommendations from grant recipients on how the program could be improved; and, information on how these funds helped them recover from a violent or traumatic crisis.

The Committee is concerned about the possible mental, emotional, and behavioral health effects on students and staff resulting from lockdown drills and active shooter drills conducted in elementary and secondary schools. In response, the Committee provides \$1,000,000 for the Department to enter into an agreement with the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine (National Academies) under which the National Academies will conduct a study to assess the science on the potential mental, emotional, and behavioral health effects of firearm violence prevention activities on students and staff in elementary and secondary school settings. The study and subsequent report should include an analysis of the effects of active shooter simulations, full-scale lockdowns, secured-perimeter lockouts, and other school security measures (e.g. metal detectors, visibility of police/policing on campus) and their mental, emotional and behavioral consequences. The assessment should review the potential effects on children and youth of different ages and on students with disabilities. The National Academies report should identify practices and procedures that can minimize any adverse mental, emotional, and behavioral health effects on children, youth, and staff in elementary and secondary schools resulting from the drills and make recommendations where appropriate.

The Committee encourages the Department to continue to operate grants and technical assistance that support LEA and school building efforts to promote a safe, supportive, and positive school climate. This includes initiatives such as implementing effective discipline strategies such as positive behavior interventions and supports and restorative practices; improving access to comprehensive mental health services; fostering positive relationships; and, anti-bullying initiatives and efforts to reduce school violence. A positive school climate is the cornerstone to a safe and supportive school environment, and the Committee encourages the Depart-

ment to continue efforts to promote proactive and evidence-based efforts to foster a positive school climate that benefits all students, as opposed to simply attempting to stop rare acts of school violence.

*Full-Service Community Schools*

The Committee recommends \$30,000,000 for Full-Service Community Schools, which is \$5,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program makes competitive grants to support school-based comprehensive services for students, families, and communities. The Full-Service Community Schools program, which supports evidence-based models to meet the holistic needs of children and families, is part of the Committee’s continued initiative to provide resources for SEL. The Committee is also encouraged by research that shows comprehensive community schools as a strategy that can improve educational quality and equity for students from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, the Committee urges the Department to provide technical assistance to SEAs and LEAs that are interested in leveraging Full-Service Community Schools grants to meet local school improvement needs.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$787,400,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	-----
Committee Recommendation .....	797,400,000
Change from enacted level .....	+10,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+797,400,000

This program provides formula grants to States to serve Limited English Proficient (LEP) students. Grants are based on each State’s share of the National LEP students and recent immigrant student population. Funds under this account also support professional development to increase the pool of teachers prepared to serve LEP students as well as evaluation activities. The bill continues language to calculate all State awards based on a three-year average of data from the American Community Survey.

The Committee recommends \$797,400,000 for English Language Acquisition (ELA) in fiscal year 2021, which is \$10,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program.

The Committee understands that the nation’s English learner (EL) student population is rapidly growing and becoming more diverse. The Committee is deeply concerned by the academic achievement gap that persists between ELs and their peers and understands that addressing this challenge has been difficult for many States. These States rely on Federal technical assistance in crafting and administering their State and local plans under Title III of the ESEA, and the Committee recognizes the need to provide them with timely, accurate guidance. The Office of English Language Acquisition (OELA) already disseminates research and resources for teaching ELs and has the expertise needed to provide this guidance to States. Therefore, the Committee directs all assistance duties required under section 6823(f) of the ESEA to be conducted by OELA.

The Committee is supportive of the Department’s ongoing activities to study uses of funds for the ELA program, effective practices for ELs, professional development for teachers of ELs, and how

teacher residency programs impact ELs. The Committee is also supportive of the Department’s efforts to publish more detailed outcomes for EL students; however, the Committee notes that the Department does not currently collect outcome data for EL students by all ethnic and racial subgroups. The Committee strongly urges the Department to consider collecting disaggregated outcomes data to present a more complete picture of academic achievement for diverse ELs.

The Committee is concerned by the quality and availability of data for EL students on State report cards as required under ESEA and directs the Department to develop a plan to ensure States are clearly presenting required data elements for EL students in fiscal year 2021 and subsequent years. The Department is directed to share its plan with the Committees on Appropriations and provide a briefing within 270 days of enactment of this Act. In particular, the Committee is concerned about data for former EL students and urges the Department to address gaps and collect more complete information for this subgroup. The Committee directs the Department to report on its progress in responding to this request in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

The Committee is aware that children and youth who relocate from the U.S. territory of Puerto Rico, where Spanish is the primary language of instruction, to one of the 50 States or the District of Columbia are not counted in the statutory formula used to make English Language Acquisition allotments to States, set forth in section 3111(c) of the ESEA.

SPECIAL EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$13,885,228,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	13,985,228,000
Committee Recommendation .....	14,092,995,000
Change from enacted level .....	+207,767,000
Change from budget request .....	+107,767,000

Of the total amount available, \$4,553,979,000 is available for obligation on July1, 2021, and \$9,283,383,000 is available for obligation on October 1, 2021. These grants help States and localities pay for a free, appropriate education for students with disabilities aged 3 through 21.

*Grants to States*

This program provides formula grants to assist States in meeting the costs of providing special education and related services to children with disabilities. States generally transfer most of the funds to LEAs; however, they can reserve some funds for program monitoring, technical assistance, and other related activities. In order to be eligible for funds, States must make free appropriate public education available to all children with disabilities.

The Committee recommends \$12,957,892,000 for Part B Grants to States, which is \$193,500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$93,500,000 above the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The Committee is concerned that the Federal share of the excess cost of educating students with disabilities has declined and notes the critical role increased funding plays in helping to reverse this trend.

The Committee encourages the Department to address the unique needs of students who use American Sign Language (ASL). The Committee directs the Department to assess the needs of, and identify ways to better serve, students who use ASL and to share findings with the Committee in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Preschool Grants*

The Committee recommends \$397,620,000 for Preschool Grants, which is \$3,500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These funds provide additional assistance to States to help them make free, appropriate public education available to children with disabilities ages 3 through 5.

*Grants for Infants and Families*

The Committee recommends \$481,850,000 for Grants for Infants and Families, which is \$4,850,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These funds provide additional assistance to States to help them make free, appropriate public education available to children with disabilities from birth through age 2.

The Committee recommendation includes new bill language to clarify that States may use funds to support subgrants to non-profit and other organizations for State activity work under IDEA Part C.

*IDEA National Activities*

The Committee recommends \$255,633,000 for the IDEA National Activities program, which is \$5,917,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The IDEA National Activities programs support State efforts to improve early intervention and education results for children with disabilities.

*Educational Technology, Media, and Materials.*—The Committee recommends \$29,547,000 for Educational Technology, Media, and Materials, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2020 budget request. This program makes competitive awards to support the development, demonstration, and use of technology and educational media activities of educational value to children with disabilities.

The Committee continues to recognize the ongoing progress made with the tools and services provided under this program that have allowed more than 620,000 students with disabilities free access to more than 700,000 books in digitally accessible formats. The Committee strongly encourages continued effort to expand this program's reach to K–12 students in underserved areas.

*Parent Information Centers.*—The Committee recommends \$27,411,000 for Parent Information Centers, which is the same as the 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program makes awards to parent organizations to support Parent Training and Information Centers, including community parent resource centers. These centers provide training and information to meet the needs of parents of children with disabilities living in the areas served by the centers, particularly underserved

parents and parents of children who may be inappropriately identified. Technical assistance is also provided under this program for developing, assisting, and coordinating centers receiving assistance under this program.

*Personnel Preparation.*—The Committee recommends \$90,700,000 for Personnel Preparation, which is \$1,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program supports competitive awards to help address State-identified needs for qualified personnel to work with children with disabilities, and to ensure that those personnel have the necessary skills and knowledge to serve children with special needs. Awards focus on addressing the need for leadership and personnel to serve low-incidence populations. Funds are included to fully support continuation costs for grants made in prior years. The Committee notes the critical role the Personnel Preparation program plays in helping to address the nation’s shortage of teachers for students with disabilities.

Given the critical shortage of special education teachers, including the higher education special education faculty who prepare them, the Committee includes no less than \$10,000,000 for doctoral-level personnel preparation in special education.

*State Personnel Development.*—The Committee recommends \$38,630,000 for State Personnel Development, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program supports grants to States to assist with improving personnel preparation and professional development related to early intervention and educational and transition services that improve outcomes for students with disabilities. Funds are included to fully support continuation costs for grants made in prior years.

*Technical Assistance and Dissemination.*—The Committee recommends \$44,345,000 for Technical Assistance and Dissemination, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Funding supports technical assistance, demonstration projects, and information dissemination. These funds support efforts by State and local educational agencies, IHEs, and other entities to build State and local capacity to make systemic changes and improve results for children with disabilities.

*Special Olympics Education Programs.*—The Committee recommends \$25,000,000 for Special Olympics Education Programs, an increase of \$4,917,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request, to support activities authorized by the Special Olympics Sport and Empowerment Act, including Project UNIFY. This funding supports efforts to expand Special Olympics programs and the design and implementation of Special Olympics education programs that can be integrated into classroom instruction and are consistent with academic content standards.

REHABILITATION SERVICES

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$3,747,739,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	3,782,952,000
Committee Recommendation .....	3,827,500,000
Change from enacted level .....	+79,761,000
Change from budget request .....	+44,548,000

The programs in this account are authorized by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Helen Keller National Center Act, and the Randolph-Sheppard Act.

#### *Vocational Rehabilitation State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$3,667,801,000 in mandatory funding for Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) State Grants, which is \$57,761,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the same as the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

This program supports vocational rehabilitation services through formula grants to States. These grants support a wide range of services designed to help persons with physical and mental disabilities prepare for and engage in gainful employment to the extent of their capabilities. Emphasis is placed on providing vocational rehabilitation services to persons with the most significant disabilities. The Committee's recommendation provides the cost-of-living adjustment for Vocational Rehabilitation Grants to States, as authorized.

#### *Client Assistance State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$13,000,000 for Client Assistance State Grants, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Client Assistance State Grants support services for eligible individuals and applicants of the VR State Grants program, and other programs, projects, and services funded under the Rehabilitation Act. These formula grants are used to help persons with disabilities overcome problems with the service delivery system and improve their understanding of services available to them under the Rehabilitation Act.

#### *Training*

The Committee recommends \$29,388,000 for the Training program, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The program supports long-term and short-term training, in-service personnel training, and training of interpreters for deaf persons. Projects in a broad array of disciplines are funded to ensure that skilled personnel are available to serve the vocational needs of persons with disabilities. Funds are included to fully support continuation costs for grants made in prior years.

#### *Demonstration and Training Programs*

The Committee recommends \$5,796,000 for Demonstration and Training Programs, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These programs support activities designed to increase employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities by expanding and improving the availability and provision of rehabilitation and other services. The Committee recommendation includes no less than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level for parent information and training programs.

#### *Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights*

The Committee recommends \$18,650,000 for Protection and Advocacy of Individual Rights, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fis-

cal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Grants are awarded to entities that have the authority to pursue legal, administrative, and other appropriate remedies to protect and advocate for the rights of persons with disabilities.

*Supported Employment State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$22,548,000 for Supported Employment State Grants, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. These formula grants assist States in developing collaborative programs with public agencies and nonprofit agencies for training and post-employment services leading to supported employment. In supported employment programs, persons with the most significant disabilities are given special supervision and assistance to enable them to work in integrated settings.

*Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind*

The Committee recommends \$33,317,000 for Independent Living Services for Older Individuals Who Are Blind, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Funds are distributed to States according to a formula based on the population of individuals who are 55 or older and provide support for services to persons 55 years old or over whose severe visual impairment makes gainful employment extremely difficult to obtain, but for whom independent living goals are feasible.

*Helen Keller National Center*

The Committee recommends \$17,000,000 for the Helen Keller National Center for Deaf-Blind Youth and Adults, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These funds are used for the operation of a national center that provides intensive services for deaf-blind individuals and their families at Sands Point, New York, and a network of ten regional offices that provide referral, counseling, transition services, and technical assistance to service providers.

*Temporary Grants to Blind Vendors*

The Committee recommendation includes \$20,000,000 to help the Randolph-Sheppard program recover from the COVID-19 emergency. The Randolph-Sheppard Act provides a priority for blind people in every State to operate businesses called “vending facilities,” located on Federal property and serving Federal employees and the public. State laws extend these opportunities for the blind to State, county, and municipal property, as well. An agency has been designated in each State to license blind vendors, identify suitable vending locations for the blind, and to administer the program under Federal and State regulations.

SPECIAL INSTITUTIONS FOR PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$249,292,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	249,292,000
Committee Recommendation .....	253,792,000
Change from enacted level .....	+4,500,000
Change from budget request .....	+4,500,000

The Committee recommends \$253,792,000 for Special Institutions for Persons with Disabilities, which is \$4,500,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

AMERICAN PRINTING HOUSE FOR THE BLIND

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$32,431,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	32,431,000
Committee Recommendation .....	32,931,000
Change from enacted level .....	+500,000
Change from budget request .....	+500,000

This funding subsidizes the production of educational materials for legally blind persons enrolled in pre-college programs. The American Printing House for the Blind (Printing House), which is chartered by the Commonwealth of Kentucky, manufactures and maintains an inventory of educational materials in accessible formats that are distributed free of charge to schools and States based on the number of blind students in each State. The Printing House also conducts research and field activities to inform educators about the availability of materials and how to use them.

The Committee commends the Printing House for ensuring that students who are blind and visually impaired are able to benefit from the latest educational technologies. The increase in funding will help provide accessible technologies developed for students who are blind and visually impaired that are comparable to those available to their sighted peers, thus enabling students with vision loss to take advanced class work, achieve academic success, and obtain gainful employment.

NATIONAL TECHNICAL INSTITUTE FOR THE DEAF

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$79,500,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	79,500,000
Committee Recommendation .....	81,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	+1,500,000
Change from budget request .....	+1,500,000

Congress established the National Technical Institute for the Deaf (Institute) in 1965 to provide a residential facility for postsecondary technical training and education for deaf persons with the purpose of promoting the employment of these individuals. The Institute also conducts applied research and provides training related to various aspects of deafness. The Secretary of Education administers these activities through a contract with the Rochester Institute of Technology in Rochester, New York.

GALLAUDET UNIVERSITY

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$137,361,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	137,361,000
Committee Recommendation .....	139,861,000
Change from enacted level .....	+2,500,000
Change from budget request .....	+2,500,000

Gallaudet is a private, non-profit educational institution Federally chartered in 1864 providing elementary, secondary, undergraduate, and continuing education for deaf persons. In addition, the University offers graduate programs in fields related to deafness for deaf and hearing students, conducts research on deafness, and provides public service programs for deaf persons.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$7,000,000 for Gallaudet University to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, including support for students.

CAREER, TECHNICAL, AND ADULT EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$1,960,686,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	2,723,265,000
Committee Recommendation .....	1,985,686,000
Change from enacted level .....	+25,000,000
Change from budget request .....	– 737,579,000

This account includes vocational education programs authorized by the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act of 2006, as recently reauthorized by the Strengthening Career and Technical Education for the 21st Century Act, and the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act (AEFLA).

*Career and Technical Education: State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$1,300,598,000 for Career and Technical Education (CTE) State Grants, which is \$18,000,000 above the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$662,000,000 less than the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Of these funds, \$509,598,000 will become available on July 1, 2021, and \$791,000,000 will become available for obligation on October 1, 2021.

State Grants support a variety of career and technical education programs developed in accordance with the State plan. This program focuses Federal resources on institutions with high concentrations of low-income students. The populations assisted by State Grants range from secondary students in prevocational courses to adults who need retraining to adapt to changing technological and labor markets. Funding for State Grants will continue support for state-of-the-art career and technical training to students in secondary schools and community and technical colleges.

*National Programs*

The Committee recommends \$7,421,000 for National Programs, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$82,579,000 less than the fiscal year 2021 budget request. In keeping with the purpose of the National Programs, the Committee recommendation includes sufficient funding to support the conduct and dissemination of research in career and technical education.

*Cybersecurity.*—The Committee recognizes the cybersecurity threats facing our nation’s critical infrastructure sectors and the need for workers in these industries, including those who operate cyber physical systems, to be equipped with skills to keep systems secure. The Committee acknowledges that many of these operators are educated through CTE programs that prominently feature a culture of physical safety but do not incorporate cybersecurity skills. Therefore, the Committee encourages the Secretary to use Carl D. Perkins CTE Innovation and Modernization Grants to support the development of CTE programs that integrate cybersecurity and help prepare students for careers in critical infrastructure sectors. Moreover, the Committee recognizes the cybersecurity threats facing our nation’s critical infrastructure industries and the need for workers in these industries, including those who operate cyber physical systems, to be equipped with skills to keep systems secure.

*Improved Coordination between Career and Technical Education and Adult Education.*—More than 36 million U.S. adults of working age have low foundational education and literacy skills making it difficult for them to use their full range of talents and abilities on the job. This reflects a significant population of workers who could contribute more if they had opportunities to build skills that local businesses need. To ensure that these individuals can succeed in today's economy, the Committee encourages the Department to identify and pursue opportunities to better align the postsecondary CTE system with the adult education system. Adult education can be an effective on-ramp to postsecondary CTE and a valuable partner in designing and implementing integrated education and training (IET) models that blend basic skills instruction and occupational training to expand equitable access to skills training, high-quality credentials and family supporting careers.

*Workforce training.*—The Department is encouraged to work with the Departments of Labor and Commerce to expand workforce training and certifications to communities disproportionately impacted by high unemployment and low postsecondary education attainment rates.

*Youth Entrepreneurship and Financial Literacy.*—The Committee recognizes the importance of preparing our students for the 21st century workforce through CTE programs, including entrepreneurship and financial literacy. The Committee directs the Secretary to provide technical assistance and make resources available to help LEAs and IHEs prepare students for employment and attain high-skilled jobs through the implementation of entrepreneurship and financial literacy programs during and after school, including efforts to partner with community organizations. The Committee requests an update on these efforts in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

#### *Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants*

The Committee recommends \$663,955,000 for Adult Basic and Literacy Education State Grants, which is \$7,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. State formula grants, authorized under the AEFLA, support programs to enable adults to acquire basic literacy skills, to enable those who so desire to complete secondary education, and to make available to adults the means to become more employable, productive, and responsible citizens.

#### *Adult Education National Leadership Activities*

The Committee recommends \$13,712,000 for National Leadership Activities, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program supports applied research, development, dissemination, evaluation, and program improvement efforts to strengthen the quality of adult education services.

The Committee encourages the provision of technical assistance to States to foster and scale IET models by ensuring collaboration with CTE providers. IET is a service approach that provides adult education and literacy activities concurrently and contextually with workforce preparation for a specific occupation or occupational cluster for the purpose of educational and career advancement.

## STUDENT FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$24,520,352,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	22,975,352,000
Committee Recommendation .....	24,565,352,000
Change from enacted level .....	+45,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+1,590,000,000

*Pell Grants*

The Committee recommends \$22,475,352,000 in discretionary funding for the Pell Grant program, which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These funds will support Pell grants to students for the 2021–2022 academic year.

Combined with mandatory funding streams, the Committee recommendation supports a maximum Pell Grant in academic year 2021–2022 of \$6,495, a \$150 increase over fiscal year 2020 and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The increase will help the maximum grant keep pace with inflation, according to the Congressional Budget Office’s January 2020 economic assumptions.

Pell Grants help to ensure access to educational and economic opportunities for low- and middle-income students by providing need-based financial assistance. Grants are determined according to a statutory formula, which considers income, assets, household size, and the number of family members in college, among other factors. Pell Grants are the foundation of Federal postsecondary student aid programs.

*Pell Grants for Incarcerated Individuals.*—The Committee is deeply concerned about high recidivism rates and a shortage of postsecondary educational opportunities for low-income, incarcerated individuals in the U.S. Since 1994, States have been forced to reduce or permanently remove postsecondary correctional education programs. According to the American Correctional Association, States offering such postsecondary correctional education programs dropped from 37 in 1994 to only 12 in 2015. This is particularly troubling as our nation’s Federal prison population has increased by nearly 50 percent over the same period.

The Committee recognizes that access to postsecondary correctional education programs significantly reduces recidivism, helps break down racial barriers that are a common cause of disciplinary problems in the prison system, and increases access to employment for individuals who have been incarcerated. Therefore, the Committee includes new bill language that overrides a prohibition preventing students who are incarcerated from receiving a Pell Grant. In addition, the bill language includes important guardrails ensuring that students who are incarcerated receive accurate information and helpful supports in pursuing their postsecondary education.

The Committee supports the work of the Department’s Second Chance Pell Experimental Sites initiative, which is testing how expanding access to financial aid improves outcomes for individuals who are incarcerated. The Committee commends the Institute of Education Sciences for conducting a rigorous evaluation of the Second Chance Pell Experimental Site, as directed by the explanatory statement accompanying the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2020. Such study will provide critical information regard-

ing the benefits of providing members of society a second chance through the Pell Grant program.

*Pell Grant Eligibility.*—The Committee acknowledges the hardships and financial barriers faced by students in pursuit of their baccalaureate and postbaccalaureate degrees. The current lifetime eligibility unit (LEU) of 12 semesters may present certain challenges to students who, due to the rising cost of college and other social circumstances, must work while pursuing their degree, care for family, or take time off from their studies as a result of these responsibilities. Further, the Committee recognizes the lack of financial assistance and resources available for first generation graduate students who may face similar challenges. Therefore, the Committee directs the Department to provide a report within 270 days of enactment of this Act, detailing how many undergraduate students reach the Pell LEU threshold and are no longer able to receive a Pell Grant, including the institutional control and type of the college or university attended, the enrollment status of such students, and their academic progress upon reaching the threshold. In addition, such report must also include a discussion of how students who have not exceeded the LEU limit could benefit from using their remaining Pell eligibility to pursue postbaccalaureate studies, particularly focusing on historically underrepresented populations or groups.

#### *Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants*

The Committee recommends \$880,000,000 for the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) program, which is \$15,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program.

SEOG provides funds to postsecondary institutions for need-based grants of up to \$4,000 to undergraduate students, with priority given to students who are Pell-eligible. Approximately 68 percent of dependent recipients have annual family incomes under \$30,000 and nearly 71 percent of independent SEOG recipients have annual family incomes under \$20,000. Institutions must contribute a 25 percent match toward their SEOG allocation.

#### *Federal Work-Study*

The Committee recommends \$1,210,000,000 for the Federal Work-Study program, which is \$30,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$710,000,000 above the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

Federal Work-Study funds are provided through institutions to students who work part-time. The funds assist with paying for the cost of education. Approximately 3,200 colleges and universities receive funding, according to a statutory formula, and may allocate it for job location and development centers. Work-study jobs must pay at least the Federal minimum wage and institutions must provide 25 percent of student earnings.

The Committee recommendation continues funding for the Work Colleges program, which supports institutions that require all resident students to participate in a work-learning program.

*Resources for First Generation College Students.*—First generation students comprise nearly a third of all college students, yet there is a lack of dedicated support services to ensure successful

outcomes for such students. Given the Department's vested interest in ensuring successful outcomes for first generation students, the Committee directs the Department to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations, within 180 days of enactment of this Act, on improving the effectiveness of current Federal financial aid policy in supporting first generation students.

*For-profit College Accountability.*—For-profit colleges prey on servicemembers and veterans with aggressive marketing and recruiting because of a loophole that allows for-profit colleges to exclude from the cap on federally derived institutional revenue any Federal aid and educational benefits from sources other than the Department of Education. In addition, a recent study of for-profit institutions receiving GI Bill benefits found that these institutions spend little of their revenue on academic instruction, with the leading recipients spending fifteen percent or less of their revenue on instruction.

The 85/15 Rule was first implemented in 1992 as a bipartisan amendment to the Higher Education Act (HEA). It is based on the rationale that if an institution provides a quality education, individuals without access to Federal funding sources should be willing to pay for it. The rule prevented for-profit postsecondary institutions from deriving more than 85 percent of revenues from Title IV of the HEA. It was based on a longstanding principle first enacted in 1952 to protect veterans from for-profit college abuses dating back to the original GI Bill, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, in 1944, and was in response to widespread reports that many for-profit colleges were using aggressive, sometimes fraudulent recruiting tactics in order to profit off of students with access to Federal student aid funding. In 1992, the rule was amended to allow for-profits to derive an extra five percent of their revenue from Title IV and became known as the 90/10 Rule. Since that time, thousands of students have been defrauded by schools that have since gone out of business. Students who graduate from these schools can obtain degrees that often offer little value. A 2016 National Bureau of Economic Research study using data from the Department and the Internal Revenue Service found that the earnings of students who attend for-profit colleges or universities are lower than if they had never enrolled at all. And while the for-profit college sector enrolls only nine percent of all students, 33 percent of all borrower who defaulted on student loans attend for-profit colleges.

Given these deeply disappointing outcomes, the Committee believes that reverting back to the 85/15 ratio and closing the loophole is a critical step in holding for-profit colleges accountable and protecting students from predatory practices and taxpayer dollars from being wasted. Therefore, the Committee includes new bill language requiring that for-profit institutions of higher education receive not more than 85 percent of their revenue from Federal sources and that all Federal education assistance funds are counted in the ratio.

In addition, in House Report 116–62, the Committee directed the Department to produce an analysis of all for-profit institutions who would exceed the 90/10 Federal funding limits if revenue from the Veterans Affairs (VA) and Department of Defense (DoD) were included in the 90/10 calculation. The Committee is disappointed that, to date, the Department has not provided such an analysis to

the Committee and notes that the Department was capable of and produced a similar report in 2016.

*Ability to Benefit.*—The Committee supports the Ability to Benefit provision in the HEA, which allows students to pursue a higher education without a high school diploma and receive Federal financial aid. The Committee encourages the Department to maximize this opportunity and conduct outreach efforts to ensure that more individuals are aware of this opportunity and able to utilize this provision and pursue a higher education.

FEDERAL DIRECT STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM ACCOUNT

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$50,000,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	---
Committee Recommendation .....	50,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	---
Change from budget request .....	+50,000,000

The Committee recommendation includes \$50,000,000 for the Federal Direct Student Loan Program Account program (also known as Temporary Expanded Public Service Loan Forgiveness or TEPSLF). Congress created the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program in 2007 to provide loan relief to borrowers pursuing careers in public service. After making 120 qualifying payments, the equivalent of 10 years, borrowers first became eligible for forgiveness under the program in 2017. While 150,545 borrowers believed they qualified for loan forgiveness and submitted applications, as of April 2020, only 2,215 borrowers have had their discharges processed by the Department under PSLF.

TEPSLF was established to address the administrative failures of the Department and student loan servicers, who did not provide accurate information to borrowers seeking to qualify under the PSLF program. This account provides funding for loan forgiveness for borrowers who were led to believe they qualified for PSLF by their loan servicers but were denied forgiveness. Unfortunately, the Department has failed to effectively administer this program as well. According to recent data from the Department, over 30,000 borrowers applied for relief under TEPSLF as of April 2020, but only 1,826 applications were approved.

The Committee remains concerned about the Department’s administration of PSLF, particularly with respect to qualifying employment determinations and qualifying payment calculations. The Committee directs the Department to refrain from reversing any qualifying employment determination already issued that declared employment as satisfactory for inclusion in the program. The Committee further directs the Department to calculate multiple payments made to a loan servicer within a payment period that combine to result in the payment amount total required for the payment period to be counted as a qualifying payment toward the 120 payments required by the program.

The Committee supports the Department’s recent announcement to consolidate the PSLF and TEPLSF applications and encourages further actions that help borrowers navigate the program without unnecessary bureaucratic burden. The Committee directs the Department to ensure that this change to the TEPSLF program is properly communicated to borrowers along with a notification that reiterates all PSLF qualification requirements. The Committee also

directs the Department to include an update in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification identifying areas where the Department has improved the administration of the PSLF and TEPSLF programs and what more can be done.

The Department shall brief the Committees on Appropriations within 60 days of enactment of this Act on actions planned or taken: (1) to address and implement recommendations outlined in a GAO report entitled “Public Service Loan Forgiveness: Improving the Temporary Expanded Process Could Help Reduce Borrower Confusion” (GAO–19–595); (2) to provide more information to borrowers denied TEPSLF on the reason for the denial; (4) to conduct outreach to borrowers who may be eligible for TEPSLF; and (5) to improve administration of the PSLF program, including by implementing GAO’s recommendations for that program.

The Committee notes that many physicians are excluded from receiving forgiveness under section 455(m)(3) of the HEA as they are prohibited from direct employment with private, non-physician, corporate entities within their States. As such, the Committee encourages the Secretary to provide full-time borrowers who are engaged in health care practitioner occupations in such States, including California and Texas, with loan cancellations that are consistent with the Department’s ongoing loan cancellations for health care practitioners across the country.

STUDENT AID ADMINISTRATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$1,768,943,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	1,883,309,000
Committee Recommendation .....	1,768,943,000
Change from enacted level .....	---
Change from budget request .....	- 114,366,000

Programs administered under the Student Aid Administration (SAA) include Pell Grants, campus-based programs, Teacher Education Assistance for College and Higher Education (TEACH) grants, and Federal student loan programs.

*Salaries and Expenses.*—Within the total provided for SAA, the Committee recommends \$878,943,000 for salaries and expenses, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$269,661,000 below the fiscal year 2021 request.

*Loan Servicing Activities.*—Within the total provided for SAA, the Committee recommends \$890,000,000 for Loan Servicing Activities, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$155,295,000 above the fiscal year 2021 request.

The Committee held a hearing at the beginning of the 116th Congress to conduct oversight of student loan servicing. The hearing exposed troubling practices by the Department and loan servicers. After bringing these issues to light, Congress included new reforms in the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2020, to ensure borrowers are getting the help they need. The Committee is reviewing the Department’s efforts to implement reforms as it considers the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$40,000,000 for administrative expenses to support changes to the student aid programs to assist students and borrowers in response to COVID–19.

*Federal Student Aid Feedback System and Ombudsman Group.*—The Federal Student Aid Feedback System may be used by the public to submit feedback, report an issue or complaint, send a suggestion, provide information about a suspicious activity or an alleged scam, dispute a resolution, or give feedback about the Federal financial aid experience. The Ombudsman Group at the Department is a neutral, informal, and confidential resource to help resolve disputes about Federal student aid. Unfortunately, many borrowers do not know that the Department provides these services. The Committee directs the Department and student loan servicers to inform all consumers who express concern with their student aid experience of the services offered by the Federal Student Aid Feedback System and the Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group. The Committee directs the Department to prominently display links to the Federal Student Aid Feedback System and the Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group at the top of <https://studentaid.gov/>, the Department of Education's home page and any customer facing Federal Student Aid website. Within 120 days of enactment of this Act, the Committee directs the Department to update the Committees on Appropriations on these efforts to improve knowledge of the Federal Student Aid Feedback System and the Federal Student Aid Ombudsman Group.

*TEACH Grant Program.*—The TEACH Grant Program provides grants of \$4,000 per year (for up to 4 years) to undergraduate and graduate students who are preparing for a career in teaching and who commit to teaching a high-need subject in a high-poverty elementary or secondary school for four years. This grant is converted to a Federal Direct Unsubsidized Stafford Loan if a teacher does not fulfill their commitment. In 2015, GAO found 2,252 students had their grants incorrectly converted to loans. The Department's own subsequent investigation found that nearly 11,000 TEACH Grant recipients had their grants incorrectly turned into loans. The Committee directs the Department to include in its fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification an update on the specific accountability measures that have been put in place since the Department's investigation to ensure TEACH grants are not mistakenly converted to loans.

*Deferment for Borrowers Receiving Cancer Treatment.*—The Committee remains committed to individuals undergoing cancer treatment to defer their Federal student loans as outlined in Sec. 309 of P.L. 115-245.

*State and Nonprofit Subcontracting.*—The Committee believes that State and nonprofit organizations can assist Federal student loan servicers in providing important services to struggling borrowers who need access to more specialized support services throughout their postsecondary education to help them understand their financial decisions and act as advocates to help struggling borrowers understand the student loan repayment process and options that may be available to them to help mitigate delinquencies and defaults. The Committee urges the Department to explore incentives for Federal student loan servicers to subcontract with qualified State and nonprofit organizations as well as small businesses, including the Next Generation Processing and Servicing Environment. Further, the Committee directs the Department to include an update in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget

Justification on these incentives, its contracting and subcontracting processes, including barriers for State and nonprofit organizations and small businesses among subcontractors and strategies for addressing such barriers. Where not prohibited by Federal law or regulation, the Committee directs the Department to publish any contract or subcontract award related to the Business Process Operations solicitation on the Federal Student Aid Data Center website within 30 days of such information becoming available.

*Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools.*—Accrediting agencies provide an important role in guarding access to Federal student aid and ensuring that students receive a quality education. However, ACICS has a history of certifying predatory for-profit institutions, and an extensive review conducted in 2018 by Department staff showed that ACICS failed to meet 57 of 93 federal standards. In addition, ACICS is no longer recognized by the Council for Higher Education Accreditation, and recent reporting shows that ACICS accredited an institution without any staff, students, or alumni. In House Report 116–62, the Committee directed the Secretary to certify in a report that ACICS demonstrated compliance with all 57 of those standards before choosing to recognize ACICS. The Committee is deeply troubled that the Department has yet to produce this report and that ACICS is still recognized by the Secretary of Education.

*Next Generation Servicing Environment.*—In 2017, the Department initiated the Next Generation Processing and Servicing Environment (Next Gen). Since that time, Congress has provided billions of dollars in taxpayer funding for Student Aid Administration activities, including the development and implementation of Next Gen. However, the Committee is deeply troubled by FSA’s lack of transparency regarding associated costs and use of funds for Next Gen. The explanatory statement accompanying the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2020, required FSA “to provide a detailed strategic plan for Next Gen to the Committees within 180 days of enactment of this Act, accounting for the cost of all activities associated with the full implementation of Next Gen, including transition costs.” No such plan has been provided to date. Moreover, the Committee notes that implementation of Next Gen has been riddled with bid protests and recompetes. In addition, while the Department has stated that Next Gen would bring about cost savings in the delivery and operation of student loan servicing, it is not clear whether any savings have been produced. Therefore, the recommendation includes new bill language requiring FSA to produce the overdue strategic plan. The recommendation also includes new bill language requiring FSA to submit a detailed spend plan of anticipated uses, including contracts awarded, change requests, bonuses paid to staff, reorganization costs, and any other activity supported by this appropriation.

In an effort to further promote transparency concerning Next Gen, the Committee directs FSA to provide to the Committees on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education and Labor, and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, within 45 days of enactment of this Act, all contracts pertaining to Next Gen, including Digital and Customer Care, Enhanced Processing Solution, and Business Process Operations. FSA is further directed to provide a detailed description of the accountability pro-

visions pertaining to each contract within 45 days of enactment of this Act, as well.

*GAO Audit.*—The Committee is concerned that in 2019 a GAO report (GAO–19–471) identified the Department’s information technology systems as one of the 10 most critical legacy systems in need of modernization. The Department stated that it intends to modernize its systems as part of its Next Gen initiative. This initiative would modernize FSA’s technical and operational architecture and improve the customer experience. However, the Department has yet to develop a plan for the modernization of its legacy systems. As a result, the Committee directs GAO to complete an in-depth review and audit of the FSA Office’s transition to the Next Gen initiative including cost and schedule estimates; requirements development/management; stakeholder involvement; plans for the disposition of the legacy systems; and, measures to track the success of the modernization.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$2,475,792,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	1,788,634,000
Committee Recommendation .....	2,556,815,000
Change from enacted level .....	+81,023,000
Change from budget request .....	+768,181,000

The CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$30,750,000,000 for the Education Stabilization Fund (ESF) to prevent, prepare for, and respond to the coronavirus, domestically or internationally. The ESF included \$13,952,505,000 in funding for higher education emergency relief and \$3,000,000,000 in funding to governors for elementary, secondary, and postsecondary emergency relief.

*Strengthening Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$114,244,000 for the Part A, Strengthening Institutions program, which is \$6,390,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funding supports competitive grants for general operating subsidies to institutions with below average educational and general expenditures per student and significant percentages of low-income students. Funds may be used for faculty and academic program development, management, joint use of libraries and laboratories, acquisition of equipment, and student services.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$148,591,000 for the Strengthening Institutions program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Homelessness in Community College Students.*—Within 180 days of enactment of this Act, the Committee requests the Department to issue a report on challenges faced by community college students. This includes housing and food insecurity. This report should focus on Minority Serving Institutions and institutions in low income census areas.

*Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$155,081,000 for the Developing Hispanic-Serving Institutions (HSI) program, which is \$12,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021

budget request does not include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it and the following programs into a single grant program for Minority Serving Institutions (MSI): (1) Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Serving Institutions, (2) Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions, (3) Strengthening Asian American and Native American Pacific Islander Serving Institutions, (4) Strengthening Native American Serving Nontribal Institutions, and (6) Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans. The Committee rejects this budget proposal and does not include funds for such purpose.

The Developing HSIs program provides operating subsidies to schools that serve at least 25 percent Hispanic students. Funds may be used for faculty and academic program development, management, joint use of libraries and laboratories, acquisition of equipment, and student services.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$197,123,000 for the Developing HSIs program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*K–12 and Hispanic-Serving Institutions Diversity Pipeline Programs in the Arts.*—Latinos/Hispanics continue to be the largest ethnic minority in the U.S. and the second fastest growing ethnic minority group. Nevertheless, Latinos/Hispanics continue to be under-represented and misrepresented in the entertainment industry. The Committee supports efforts to increase Latino/Hispanic students' exposure and training to careers in the arts in K–12 public education, and through postsecondary education at HSIs. The Committee directs the Department to work with HSIs and provide technical assistance to support comprehensive pipeline programs in the arts in partnership with school districts that enroll a majority, minority student population. The Committee requests periodic updates on any progress in developing such programs, including in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Graduation Rates.*—The Committee notes that HSIs provide many benefits and educational opportunities to their students. However, the Committee is concerned that students at HSIs may be graduating at lower rates than students at non-HSIs. Therefore, the Committee directs the Department to provide an update in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification on graduation rates, retention rates, and persistence rates for students at HSIs, including a strategy on how to improve overall postsecondary completion at HSIs.

*Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Americans*

The Committee recommends \$13,599,000 for the Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans program, which is \$761,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it into a single MSI grant program, which the Committee does not support. This program provides expanded postbaccalaureate educational opportunities for the academic attainment of Hispanic and low-income students. In addition, it expands academic offerings and enhances program quality at IHEs educating the majority of Hispanic college students.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$17,687,000 for the Promoting Postbaccalaureate Opportunities for Hispanic Americans program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities*

The Committee recommends \$344,034,000 for Strengthening Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), which is \$19,242,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program provides operating subsidies to accredited HBCUs that were established prior to 1964, with the principal mission of educating Black Americans. Funds are distributed through a formula grant based on the enrollment of Pell Grant recipients, number of graduates, and the number of graduates entering graduate or professional schools in which Black students are underrepresented.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$447,466,000 for the Strengthening HBCUs program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Historically Black Graduate Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$88,971,000 for the Strengthening Historically Black Graduate Institutions (HBGIs) program, which is \$4,976,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The program provides five-year grants to 18 postsecondary institutions that are specified in section 326(e)(1) of the HEA. Institutions may use funds to build endowments, provide scholarships and fellowships, and to assist students with the enrollment and completion of postbaccalaureate and professional degrees.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$115,720,000 for the Strengthening HBGIs program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$13,979,000 for the Strengthening Predominantly Black Institutions (PBIs) program, which is \$782,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it into a single MSI grant program, which the Committee does not support. This program provides grants to PBIs to increase their capacity to serve the academic needs of students.

The bill includes new bill language allowing certain PBIs to be eligible for additional grants.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$18,182,000 for the Strengthening PBIs program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander-Serving Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$4,707,000 for the Strengthening Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander-Serving Institutions program, which is \$263,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not

include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it into a single MSI grant program, which the Committee does not support. This program provides grants to undergraduate institutions that have an undergraduate student enrollment of at least 10 percent Asian American or Native American Pacific Islander.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$6,123,000 for the Strengthening Asian American and Native American Pacific-Islander-Serving Institutions program to directly support students and institutions addressing the effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$19,405,000 for the Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions program, which is \$1,085,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it into a single MSI grant program, which the Committee does not support. Through the Strengthening Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian-Serving Institutions program, the Department provides grants to assist IHEs in serving Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian students.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$6,123,000 for the Strengthening Alaska Native and Hawaiian-Serving Institutions program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$4,707,000 for the Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions program, which is \$263,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not include funding for this program and proposes to consolidate it into a single MSI grant program, which the Committee does not support. This program makes grants to IHEs at which enrollment is at least 10 percent Native American students and that are not Tribally Controlled Colleges or Universities.

The Committee urges the Secretary to support the preparation and development of aspiring rural and Indigenous PreK–12 teachers and leaders to enable the implementation of effective cultural and heritage language programs for PreK–12 students.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$6,123,000 for the Strengthening Native American Serving Non-Tribal Institutions program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities*

The Committee recommends \$38,804,000 for the Strengthening Tribally Controlled Colleges and Universities (TCCUs) program, which is \$2,171,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program makes grants to TCCUs to increase their capacity to serve the academic needs of students.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$148,591,000 for the Strengthening TCCUs program to directly support students and institutions addressing effects of COVID–19.

*Strengthening HBCU Masters Program*

The Committee recommends \$10,546,000 for the Strengthening HBCU Masters Programs, which is \$590,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program provides grants to specified colleges and universities making a substantial contribution to graduate education opportunities at the Master's level in mathematics, engineering, the physical or natural sciences, computer science, information technology, nursing, allied health, or other scientific disciplines.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$13,716,000 for the Strengthening HBCU Masters Program to directly support students and institutions addressing the effects of COVID–19.

*International Education and Foreign Language Studies*

*Domestic Programs.*—The Committee recommends \$70,762,000 for the Domestic Programs of the International Education and Foreign Languages Studies program, which is \$2,659,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Authorized by Title VI of the HEA, these programs include National resource centers, foreign language and area studies fellowships, undergraduate international studies and foreign language programs, international research and studies projects, business and international education projects, international business education centers, language resource centers, American overseas research centers, and technological innovation and cooperation for foreign information access.

*Overseas Programs.*—The Committee recommends \$9,561,000 for the Overseas Programs, which is \$1,500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. Funding for these programs support group projects, faculty research, special bilateral research, and doctoral dissertation research conducted abroad.

*Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities*

The Committee recommends \$12,300,000 for the Model Comprehensive Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID) program, which is \$500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. TPSID supports grants to create model transition programs into postsecondary education for students with intellectual disabilities.

*Minority Science and Engineering Improvement*

The Committee recommends \$13,384,000 for the Minority Science and Engineering Improvement Program, which is \$749,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$136,616,000 below the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program awards grants to improve mathematics, science, and engineering programs at institutions serving primarily minority students and to increase the number of minority students who pursue advanced degrees and careers in those fields.

*Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions*

The Committee recommends \$10,592,000 for this program, which is \$592,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The Tribally Controlled Postsecondary Career and Technical Institutions program awards competitive grants to Tribally controlled postsecondary career and technical institutions to provide career and technical education to Native American students.

*Federal TRIO Programs*

The Committee recommends \$1,100,000,000 for TRIO programs, which is \$10,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$150,000,000 above the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The TRIO programs provide a variety of outreach and support services to encourage low-income, first-generation college students and individuals with disabilities to enter and complete college. Discretionary grants of up to four or five years are awarded competitively to IHEs and other nonprofit organizations. At least two thirds of the eligible participants in TRIO must be low-income, first-generation college students.

The Committee rejects the fiscal year 2021 budget proposal to move the TRIO programs from competitive grant programs to a single State formula program. Further, the Committee directs the Department to allocate any grant funding not needed for non-competitive continuation awards or for programs up for competition in fiscal year 2021 to provide inflationary increases for current grantees and to increase the number and size of new awards in the Talent Search and Educational Opportunity Centers grant competitions. The Department is also directed to ensure that the notices inviting applications for new awards for the Talent Search and Educational Opportunity Centers grant competitions no later than October 15, 2020 for Talent Search and no later than November 15, 2020 for Educational Opportunity Centers. The Department is further directed to take steps necessary to award funding as early as possible, but no later than June 30, 2021.

*Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs*

The Committee recommends \$370,000,000 for Gaining Early Awareness and Readiness for Undergraduate Programs (GEAR UP), which is \$5,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes no funds for this program and to consolidate it into a new State formula-based TRIO program. The Committee rejects this proposal. GEAR UP provides grants to States and partnerships of low-income middle and high schools, IHEs, and community organizations to target entire grades of students and give them the skills, encouragement, and scholarships to pursue successfully postsecondary education.

The Committee continues bill language allowing the Department to maintain the GEAR UP evaluation set-aside at 1.5 percent to work with the GEAR UP community and grantees to standardize data collection, including through the use of third-party data systems.

Furthermore, the Committee directs the Department to announce Notices Inviting Applications for New Awards for State Grants and Partnership Grants in the Federal Register. In such notice for State grants, the Committee directs the Department to uphold the long-standing guidance that States may only administer one active State GEAR UP grant at a time. The Secretary is directed to provide written guidance in the Federal Register notifying applicants that only States without an active State GEAR UP grant, or States that have an active State GEAR UP grant that is scheduled to end prior to October 1, 2021, will be eligible to receive a new State GEAR UP award funded in whole or in part by this appropriation. The Secretary is further directed to ensure that no request from a State Grant applicant to receive an exception to the GEAR UP scholarship (as described in section 404E(b)(2) of the HEA) shall be denied on the basis of 34 CFR 694.14(c)(3).

#### *Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need*

The Committee recommends \$24,047,000 for the Graduate Assistance in Areas of National Need (GAANN) program, which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. GAANN provides fellowships through grants to degree granting postsecondary institutions, for students of high financial need studying in areas of national need. The Department consults with appropriate agencies and organizations to designate the fields of study “in areas of national need.” GAANN offers innovative graduate education programs, with associated fellowship opportunities, at the intersection of humanities, arts, STEM, and health associated fields in order to prepare our national graduate students for increasingly interdisciplinary global challenges. Recent examples include computer and informational sciences, engineering, nursing, and physics.

Since 2012, an academic area related to health professions has only been designated once. It is estimated that more than 18 percent of the U.S. adult population has suffered from any mental illness. Mental health is clearly an area of national need. The Committee directs the Secretary to consider the inclusion of academic areas that fall under the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP) 51.15 Mental Health Services on the next grant competition.

#### *Teacher Quality Partnership Grants*

The Committee recommends \$52,092,000 for the Teacher Quality Partnerships (TQP) program, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. The TQP program helps improve the quality of teachers working in high-need schools and early childhood education programs by creating model teacher preparation and residency programs.

The Committee recognizes the importance of State teaching fellowship programs and encourages the Department to continue to work with eligible State teaching fellowship programs that wish to apply for the TQP program.

The Committee recognizes the needs of the nation’s growing English learner (EL) student population, including a robust teacher workforce equipped with the skills to teach them. The Committee

is concerned by the shortage of EL teachers in the majority of States, as well the academic achievement gap between ELs and their native English-speaking peers. Therefore, the Committee recommends the Secretary support the development and strengthening of high-quality teacher preparation programs that enable graduates to meet licensure or certification requirements to teach ELs.

*Child Care Access Means Parents in School*

The Committee recommends \$55,000,000 for the Child Care Access Means Parents in School program, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$39,866,000 above the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program makes competitive grants to colleges and universities to support or establish a campus-based childcare program primarily serving the needs of low-income students enrolled at the institution.

The Committee is concerned with the disproportionate levels of support that colleges and universities provide to students who are parents. The Committee directs the Secretary to provide a report on: (1) the percentage of students who are parents in colleges and universities, disaggregated by race, socioeconomic status, and age; (2) services institutions provide for student parents; (3) outreach methods to ensure students are informed of available resources; (4) the availability of on-campus and subsidized childcare; and (5) the availability of lactation rooms for nursing mothers. The Committee requests this report no later than one year after enactment of this Act.

*Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education*

The Committee recommendation includes \$31,000,000 for the Fund for the Improvement of Postsecondary Education, which is \$6,500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget proposes to eliminate this program.

*Centers of Excellence for Veteran Student Success Program.*— The Committee includes \$7,000,000 to support existing and new grantees for the Centers of Excellence for Veterans Student Success Program, as authorized by section 873 of the HEA. Funding provided in fiscal year 2020 supported the first competition for this program since fiscal year 2015. The fiscal year 2021 budget request does not include funding for this program.

Over one million veterans attend college every year and often need assistance receiving their benefits or transitioning to student life. Veteran Student Centers provide a one-stop-shop for academic support, networking opportunities, peer mentorship, financial assistance, counseling, and career services.

The Department should ensure that this program continues to support comprehensive services including veteran benefits assistance, tutoring, counseling, and housing. The Committee directs the Department to brief the Committees on Appropriations no later than 90 days after enactment of this Act on its plan to continue to carry out this program, as well as a plan for evaluation and accountability, and to notify the Committees no later than 15 days in advance of making any new grant award or changes to the programs.

*Center of Educational Excellence.*—The Committee notes that Black teachers make up about seven percent of the nation’s public school teaching force, while the Black student population is about 14 percent. A comprehensive report published by the Department in 2016 on the State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce notes the significant contributions HBCUs make in the production of the Nation’s educators. The report also notes that Black men make up less than two percent of teachers. The Committee recommendation includes \$2,000,000 to support a model center of educational excellence at an undergraduate HBCU with a demonstrable record in the production of Black teachers. The Committee directs the Department to provide a briefing within 90 days of enactment of this Act on its plans to establish this center.

*Basic Needs Grants.*—The Committee recognizes that many college and graduate students are unable to achieve academic success because they cannot afford to meet their basic needs, such as housing, food, transportation, and access to physical and mental health services. The Committee includes \$5,000,000 for competitive grants to at least four institutions of higher education, as defined by section 101 of the HEA, to support programs that address the basic needs of students and report on best practices. In order to qualify, grantees must agree to use funds to carry out or expand at least two of the following activities to fund basic needs programs that support temporary housing, secure sleeping arrangements, provide free or subsidized food, access to on-campus childcare, and/or other basic needs to eligible students; construct housing on community college campuses; conduct outreach to students to encourage participation in basic needs programs and services; help eligible students apply for and enroll in local, State, and Federal public assistance programs; or coordinate and collaborate with government and/or community-based organizations. At least 25 percent of grants must go to community colleges. Grant priority will go to institutions with 25 percent or higher Pell enrollment, HBCUs, HSIs, and other MSIs that are located in areas with high median house prices compared to income and high concentrations of Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program and/or Temporary Assistance for Needy Families benefit recipients.

*Transitioning Gang-Involved Youth to Higher Education.*—The Committee directs the Department to work in conjunction with the Department of Labor to allocate no less than \$1,000,000 to provide a funding opportunity for organizations that work directly with gang involved youth to help such youth pursue higher education opportunities.

*Modeling and Simulation Programs.*—The Committee includes \$7,000,000 for Modeling and Simulation Programs as authorized under section 891 of the HEA. Modeling and simulation technology has numerous applications for Federal and State governments and their partners in the defense, education, gaming, shipbuilding, and workforce training sectors, allowing them to generate data to help make decisions or predictions about their systems.

*National Center for Information and Technical Support for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities.*—The Committee includes \$2,000,000 for the operation of the National Center for Information and Technical Support for Postsecondary Students with Disabilities as authorized under section 777(a) of the HEA.

*Open Textbook Pilot.*—The agreement includes \$7,000,000 to continue the Open Textbook Pilot and fund a new grant competition in fiscal year 2021. The Department shall issue a notice inviting applications consistent with notice and comment procedures and allow for a 60-day application period. This funding should support a significant number of grant awards to IHEs as defined by 20 U.S.C. 1001, a group of IHEs, or State higher education agencies that lead the activities of (and serve as fiscal agent for) a consortium. Funding should be used to create new open textbooks and expand the use of open textbooks in courses that are part of a degree granting program, and particularly those with high enrollments. Allowable uses of funds should include professional development for faculty and staff, including relating to the search for and review of open textbooks; the creation or adaptation of open textbooks; development or improvement of tools and informational resources that support the use of open textbooks, including accessible instructional materials for students with disabilities; and research evaluating the efficacy of the use of open textbooks for achieving savings for students and the impact on instruction and student learning outcomes. The Secretary shall require that any open textbooks created with these funds shall be released to the public under a non-exclusive, royalty-free, perpetual, and irrevocable license to exercise any of the rights under copyright conditioned only on the requirement that attribution be given as directed by the copyright owner. Further, any tools, technologies, or other resources that are created, developed, or improved wholly or in part with these funds for use with any open textbook must be similarly licensed. Any eligible entity receiving a grant through the Open Textbooks Pilot, upon completion of the supported project, shall report to the Secretary regarding the effectiveness of the project in expanding the use of open textbooks and in achieving savings for students; the impact of the project on expanding the use of open textbooks at IHEs outside of the institution receiving the grant; open textbooks created or adapted under the grant, including instructions on where the public can access each open textbook; the impact of the project on instruction and student learning outcomes; and all project costs, including the value of any volunteer labor and institutional capital used for the project. The Secretary shall make such reports publicly available.

*Film Programs at Institutions of Higher Education.*— Within 180 days of enactment of this Act, the Committee directs the Department to provide a report on student diversity in film programs at IHEs and film schools. The report should include the following information: the number of film schools and institutions that receive any Federal funds and grants administered by the Department of Education; where data are available, the diversity of film school applicants; the diversity of accepted film students; and the diversity of students enrolled in their programs. These data should be disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender where applicable and where data are available. The report should also include an examination of recruitment efforts, including the results of these efforts, to help ensure a diverse class of accepted film school students.

*Skills training program.*—The Committee strongly urges the Department to create a pilot program that enhances economic opportunities in digital literacy by supporting institutions of higher edu-

cation in developing and providing 21st-century college programs and opportunities that increases students' employability through knowledge and skill enhancements.

HOWARD UNIVERSITY

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$240,018,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	240,018,000
Committee Recommendation .....	254,018,000
Change from enacted level .....	+14,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+14,000,000

Howard University is a leading research university located in the District of Columbia and provides undergraduate liberal arts, graduate and professional instruction to students.

Within the amount provided, the Committee recommends \$37,325,000 for the Howard University Hospital, which is \$10,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. The hospital serves as a major acute and ambulatory care center for the District of Columbia, and functions as a teaching facility. To continue this vital function, the Committee includes \$10,000,000 to begin work to modernize the hospital's facilities and will continue to evaluate the needs of this multi-year initiative.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116-136) included \$13,000,000 for Howard University to prevent, prepare for, and respond to coronavirus, including support for students.

COLLEGE HOUSING AND ACADEMIC FACILITIES LOANS PROGRAM

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$435,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	435,000
Committee Recommendation .....	435,000
Change from enacted level .....	---
Change from budget request .....	---

Previously, these programs helped to ensure that postsecondary institutions were able to make necessary capital improvements to maintain and increase their ability to provide a high-quality education. Since 1994, no new loans have been made, and the Department's role has been to manage the outstanding loans.

HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY CAPITAL FINANCING PROGRAM ACCOUNT

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$46,484,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	40,484,000
Committee Recommendation .....	48,484,000
Change from enacted level .....	+2,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+8,000,000

The Committee recommends \$48,484,000 for the HBCU Capital Financing program, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$8,000,000 above the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program is authorized under part D of Title III of the HEA and makes capital available for repair and renovation of facilities at HBCUs. In exceptional circumstances, capital provided under the program can be used for construction or acquisition of facilities.

Within the total provided for this program, the Committee recommendation includes \$334,000 for the administrative expenses to carry out the program and \$22,150,000 for loan subsidy costs,

which will be sufficient to guarantee up to \$278,266,000 in new loans in fiscal year 2021, an increase of \$58,266,000 in new loan volume over the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

The Committee recommendation also includes \$16,000,000 to continue loan deferments initially requested in fiscal year 2018 for private HBCUs and continues bill language to provide loan deferments for public HBCUs.

INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION SCIENCES

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$623,462,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	565,440,000
Committee Recommendation .....	630,462,000
Change from enacted level .....	+7,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+65,022,000

The Committee recommends \$630,462,000 for the Institute of Education Sciences (IES), \$7,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$65,022,000 more than the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

The Committee notes that the IES study regarding whether Pell grant eligibility and shorter-term programs improves access to job training was due to be released September 2019. The Committee directs IES to publish the study within 30 days of enactment of this Act.

*Research, Development, and Dissemination*

The Committee recommends \$197,877,000 for Research, Development, and Dissemination, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This account supports research, development, and national dissemination activities that are aimed at expanding fundamental knowledge of education and promoting the use of research and development findings in the design of efforts to improve education.

*Statistics*

The Committee recommends \$111,500,000 for the activities of the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$2,000,000 below the fiscal year 2021 budget request. Statistics activities are authorized under Title I of the Education Sciences Reform Act of 2002. NCES collects, analyzes, and reports statistics on all levels of education in the U.S. Activities are carried out directly and through grants and contracts and include projections of enrollments, teacher supply and demand, and educational expenditures. NCES also provides technical assistance to State and local educational agencies and postsecondary institutions.

The Committee recommends that NCES collect and publish data for Puerto Rico in the same manner it collects and publishes data for States.

*Regional Educational Laboratories*

The Committee recommends \$57,022,000 for Regional Educational Laboratories (RELs), which is \$1,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget request proposes to eliminate this program. This program supports a network of 10 laboratories that promote the use and development of

knowledge and evidence to increase student learning and further school improvement efforts.

The Committee notes the critical role RELs play in helping to translate education research to policymakers and practitioners, which assists SEAs and LEAs in implementing ESSA and providing a high-quality education for more children.

#### *Research in Special Education*

The Committee recommends \$58,500,000 for Research in Special Education, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program supports competitive awards to produce and advance the use of knowledge to improve services and results for children with disabilities. The program focuses on producing new knowledge, integrating research and practice, and improving the use of knowledge.

#### *Special Education Studies and Evaluations*

The Committee recommends \$11,318,000 for Special Education Studies and Evaluations, which is \$500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This program awards competitive grants, contracts and cooperative agreements to assess the implementation of the IDEA and the effectiveness of State and local efforts to provide special education and early intervention programs and services to infants, toddlers, and children with disabilities.

#### *Statewide Data Systems*

The Committee recommends \$33,500,000 for Statewide Data Systems, which is \$500,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level. The fiscal year 2021 budget proposes to eliminate this program. Competitive grants under this authority are made to SEAs to help them manage, analyze, disaggregate and use student data consistent with the ESEA.

#### *Assessment*

The Committee recommends \$160,745,000 for Assessment, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$28,000,000 below the fiscal year 2021 budget request. This amount includes \$7,745,000 for the National Assessment Governing Board (NAGB), which is the same as both the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and the fiscal year 2021 budget request.

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) is the only nationally representative and continuing survey of educational ability and achievement of students in the U.S. The primary goal of the assessment is to determine and report the status and trends of the knowledge and skills of students, subject by subject. Subject areas assessed in the past have included reading, writing, mathematics, science, history, citizenship, literature, art, and music. The NAEP is operated by contractors through competitive awards made by the NCES. The NAGB formulates the policy guidelines for the program.

## DEPARTMENTAL MANAGEMENT

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$623,000,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	646,742,000
Committee Recommendation .....	626,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	+3,000,000
Change from budget request .....	-20,742,000

These activities are authorized by the Department of Education Organization Act (P.L. 96–88) and include costs associated with the management and operation of the Department as well as separate costs associated with the Office for Civil Rights and the Office of Inspector General.

*Program Administration*

The Committee recommends \$430,000,000 for Program Administration, which is the same as the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and \$18,723,000 below the fiscal year 2021 budget request. These funds support the staff and other costs of administering programs and activities at the Department. Items include personnel compensation, health, retirement, and other benefits as well as travel, rent, telephones, utilities, postage fees, data processing, printing, equipment, supplies, technology training, consultants, and other contractual services.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$8,000,000 for Program Administration to help implement and administer grant programs supporting students and schools responding to COVID–19.

*Communication with the Committee.*—There are concerns about the breakdown of the normal flow of information from some areas of the Department to the Committee. The Committee expects the Department to correct these shortcomings. If no improvement is made, the Committee will evaluate the resources spent on the offices and staff involved in the unacceptable delays regarding the transmission of information to the Committee and whether the resources are better allocated to other areas of the bill.

*Advertising Contracts.*—The Committee understands that, as the largest advertiser in the U.S., the Federal Government should work to ensure fair access to its advertising contracts for small disadvantaged businesses and businesses owned by minorities and women. The Committee directs the Department to include the following information in its fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification: Expenditures for fiscal year 2020 and expected expenditures for fiscal years 2021 and 2022, respectively, for (1) all contracts for advertising services; and (2) contracts for the advertising services of (I) socially and economically disadvantaged small business concerns (as defined in section 8(a)(4) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(a)(4)); and (II) women- and minority-owned businesses.

*Open Data Reporting.*—The Committee notes that Congress has made a significant investment in our workforce development, post-secondary, and career and technical education systems. As a result of this investment, the number of credentials in the U.S. continues to rise. However, the Committee is aware that many workers and students may face challenges in navigating an intricate network of diplomas, licenses, certifications, and badges. Therefore, the recommendation includes new bill language requiring the Department

to publicly disclose information on postsecondary credentials and competencies in an open-source format. The Committee believes that this requirement will lead to the development of useful comparison tools and other resources that will improve the delivery of workforce development and postsecondary education programs, as well as enable workers and students to make more informed choices in their educational and job-training journeys. The Committee directs the Department to ensure that such information is also provided in a consumer-tested and user-friendly manner to ensure that workers and students are able to utilize this information about potential credentials effectively.

*Investments in Impoverished Areas.*—The Committee supports targeted investments in impoverished areas, particularly in persistent poverty counties and in other high poverty census tracts. To understand how programs funded through the Department are serving these particular areas, the Committee directs the Department to submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations on the percentage of funds allocated by all competitive grant programs and other anti-poverty programs in fiscal years 2018, 2019 and 2020 and estimates for fiscal year 2021 to serve individuals living in persistent poverty counties, as defined as a county that has had 20 percent or more of its population living in poverty over the past 30 years, as measured by the 1990 and 2000 decennial censuses and the most recent Small Area Income and Poverty estimates, or any territory or possession of the United States, and high-poverty areas, as defined as any census tract with a poverty rate of at least 20 percent as measured by the 2014–2018 5-year data series available from the American Community Survey of the Census Bureau. The Department shall report this information to the Committees within 90 days of such data being available and provide a briefing to the Committees not later than 180 days of enactment of this Act on how the Department is carrying out this directive. In the case of any program for which at least 10 percent of the funds allocated in fiscal year 2020 were not allocated to persistent poverty counties or for which the percentage allocated to high-poverty areas in fiscal year 2020 was less than the average percentage of Federal assistance allocated to high-poverty areas awarded under the program in fiscal years 2017, 2018, and 2019, such report and briefing shall explain why such a benchmark is unable to be met.

*Spatial Computing.*—According to the Bureau of Labor and Statistics (BLS), the technology sector is the fastest growing market within the U.S. However, many of these jobs are being outsourced internationally. Not only does this present a threat to this Nation's economy, it also poses a threat to our national security. The Committee supports technological innovation, including spatial computing, and encourages the Department, within 180 days of enactment of the Act, to conduct and provide a feasibility report to the Committee on the establishment of a Center of Excellence designation for Spatial Computing. This designation would assist institutions of higher education in their efforts to teach and train students within the field of spatial computing. The Department should include a timeline, cost and recommendations for the creation of this Center of Excellence designation. The Committee encourages the Department to work with the Departments of Labor and Commerce for their input and recommendations.

*Vaping.*—The Committee directs the Department to coordinate with the CDC to ensure that evidence-based strategies are used to more robustly respond to the public health epidemic caused by the dramatic increase in youth use of e-cigarettes, including school-based interventions. According to the CDC, vaping among high school students soared from 1.5 percent to 27.5 percent between 2011 and 2019. Among middle school students, vaping skyrocketed from 0.6 percent to 10.5 percent.

*Puerto Rico Department of Education Subgrantee Oversight.*—The Committee understands that the Department required the Puerto Rico Department of Education (PRDE) to contract with a third-party fiduciary agent to perform financial management duties for all Department grants awarded to PRDE. The Committee recognizes the need for proper oversight of disbursement of Federal funds and acknowledges that increased oversight should not have a negative impact on students in Puerto Rico, particularly K–12 students.

*Impact of Natural Disasters.*—To help better inform Congress, the Executive Branch, and communities affected by natural disasters, the Committee directs the Department complete a study on the impact of recent natural disasters on the educational attainment and economic outcomes of individuals and families over time. Such a study could also explore the effects that extreme weather events have on SEL and other social determinants of health like physical and mental health, nutrition, and sense of community. The Committee directs the Department to brief the Committees on Appropriations on its plans for this study within 180 days of enactment of this Act.

*Public Health Emergencies.*—In the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification, the Committee encourages the Department to assess the effectiveness of various school technological interventions used for school closures due to public health emergencies. This analysis could examine characteristics of different technological interventions, including the lending of laptops, tablets, and mobile hotspots, and the cost of providing these interventions at the SEA and LEA level.

*Lead Testing and Remediation.*—The Committee strongly agrees with recommendations from a 2018 GAO report, *Lead Testing of School Drinking Water Would Benefit from Improved Federal Guidance*, that the Assistant Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education should collaborate with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to disseminate guidance related to lead testing and remediation in schools. The Committee is aware that EPA has made available updated guidance and web-based toolkits for lead testing and remediation in schools. The Committee is also aware that EPA is soliciting applications from education officials to provide grant funds to assist States and local education agencies with testing and remediation efforts. The Committee appreciates the technical assistance provided by the Department to school districts in response to language included in House Report 116–62. The Committee directs the Department to continue coordinating with EPA in disseminating this new guidance and resources, assisting school systems seeking to remediate lead contamination in working with EPA, and sharing best practices among States and local school systems. The Committee expects the Department to re-

port on the Department's ongoing efforts on these issues in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Information and Communication Technology.*—The Committee directs the Office of Educational Technology, in consultation with the Institute of Education Sciences and the National Academies of Science, to conduct a study and prepare a report and submit to the Committee within one year of enactment of this Act on the use of information and communication technology (ICT) in K–12 classrooms. The Office of Educational Technology will review the available literature on the role ICT plays in K–12 classrooms, consider both positive and negative effects, and explore how ICT can most effectively be used to support students' learning. The Office of Educational Technology will make recommendations on future directions for research, policy, and practices to improve the educational outcomes for children and youth.

*Broadband Connectivity Gaps.*—While the CDC provides guidance to schools on continuing operations during a public health crisis, the equity concerns for students who live in households without access to broadband connectivity are unknown and may not be incorporated to schools' continuity of operations plans. As such, the Secretary is encouraged to coordinate with the Departments of Health and Human Services and Agriculture and the Federal Communications Commission to study broadband connectivity gaps on the abilities of schools to implement alternative education plans for students completing distance learning assignments during extended closings due to public health crises. The Secretary of Education is encouraged to develop a plan of action for addressing broadband connectivity inequities in the short term for the current public health crisis caused by COVID–19 as well as a plan for long-term strategies to lessen the impacts of these inequities for public health crises that may prompt school closures in the future.

*National Center for Education Statistics Staffing.*—The Committee is deeply concerned about the ongoing staffing crisis at NCES. The shortage of statisticians threatens the administration and dissemination of data collections and surveys that provide an assessment of and insight in the nation's systems of education. Furthermore, these collections and surveys guide policy and funding decisions made by Congress. The Committee directs the Department to submit to the Committee within 120 days of enactment of this Act a report outlining how the Department will increase staffing at NCES as well as an analysis of funding IES in an appropriations account outside of the Program Administration account. Further, the Committee directs the Department to provide quarterly updates on its efforts to carry out the staffing plan.

*FTE and Attrition Report.*—The Committee directs the Department to provide the Committees on Appropriations a report, not later than 30 days after the conclusion of each quarter, detailing the number of full-time equivalent employees and attrition by principal office and appropriations account.

*Reporting Requirements.*—The Committee notes that the Department of Education has failed to meet all of its reporting obligations under House Report 116–62 and the explanatory statement accompanying the Department of Education Appropriations Act, 2020. The Committee also notes that this failure occurred where the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs served as the lead of-

fice for the report. The Committee continues to direct the Department to issue these overdue reports immediately. Furthermore, the Committee directs the Office of Legislation and Congressional Affairs to submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations, within 30 days of enactment of this Act, providing the reason for the delay, all actions taken by the office to expedite the delivery of the reports and to provide a detailed account of how the office will improve its process for providing these reports in a timely manner.

*Protecting Scientific Research on Marihuana.*—Through scientific research, institutions of higher education advance our understanding and knowledge of various aspects of our world. Moreover, when in the public interest, such institutions should be able to conduct such research without fear of reprisal or loss of Federal funding. This includes research on cannabis, a Schedule I controlled substance under the Controlled Substances Act. As more States and localities move to legalize cannabis, many institutions of higher education are expanding the knowledge-base on this controlled substance. As a result, the Committee notes that such research is in the public interest, and the recommendation includes new bill language prohibiting the Department from penalizing institutions of higher education that conduct scientific research on marihuana.

*Disclosure of Foreign Gifts and Contracts.*—The Committee reminds colleges and universities receiving Federal funds that section 117 of the HEA requires institutions to disclose certain gifts from or contracts with foreign entities and that the Department makes such information publicly available on its website. The Committee directs the Department to work with institutions to improve the reporting process. Disclosure requirements increase transparency and help protect our national security and academic integrity.

*Evidence-based Grants and Policy.*—The Committee requests an update in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification on implementation of the Foundations for Evidence-based Policy-making Act (P.L. 115–435) and implementation plans for the coming year. The Committee encourages the Secretary to develop guidance to ensure relevant participants and grantees are involved in the Department-wide process of prioritizing evidence needs, including participating in Department led evaluations. Consistent with program statutes, the Committee encourages the Secretary to ensure that evidence of effectiveness is a consideration in grant opportunities.

*Customer Service.*—The Committee continues to support efforts to improve customer service in accordance with Executive Order 13571—Streamlining Service Delivery and Improving Customer Service. The Committee directs the Secretary to develop standards to improve customer service and incorporate the standards into the performance plans required under 31 U.S.C. 1115. The Committee further directs the Department to include an update on the progress of these efforts in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Performance Measures.*—The Committee directs the Department to comply with title 31 of the United States Code, including the development of organizational priority goals and outcomes such as performance outcome measures, output measures, efficiency measures, and customer service measures. The Committee further di-

rects the Department to include an update on the progress of these efforts in the fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification.

*Childhood Poverty.*—The Committee is deeply concerned about the 11.9 million children, including 7.5 million Black and Latino children, living in poverty as of 2018. Now, millions more are projected to live in poverty due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Without robust Federal support, a Columbia University study estimates that child poverty could balloon from an already shameful 13.6 percent to nearly 21 percent, with Black and Latino children bearing a disproportionate risk of falling into or deeper into poverty. More than 50 percent of low-income households report they or someone in their household has experienced job loss or a pay cut, and nearly 40 million Americans have lost their jobs to date. During the pandemic, families are stretched thinner than ever and far too many families, especially in communities of color, are struggling to pay the bills and keep the lights on. The Committee recognizes that resources provided for the Department are critical now more than ever to reducing child poverty and racial disparities. However, there is concern that especially with tight budget caps for fiscal year 2021, funding for programs to help children in poverty is not enough. Deep inequities remain for children of color who are often more segregated by neighborhood, lower socioeconomic status, and in K-12 schooling. The Committee requests that the Department looks for opportunities to target resources to communities with the highest child poverty rates to help reduce child poverty and racial disparities, especially in the context of COVID-19, and as the pandemic threatens to increase child poverty for years to come.

*Dual Enrollment.*—The Committee notes the value of dual credit programs (as defined under 20 U.S.C. 7801) and directs the Secretary to provide a report to the Committees on Appropriations that includes national participation rates in dual credit programs by State, the impact of such programs on high school and post-secondary graduation rates, college preparedness, and postsecondary student debt. Within 180 days of enactment of this Act, the Department shall brief the Committees on the status of the report and provide national participation rates in dual credit programs by State.

*Ex-sites.*—The Committee directs the Department to provide a briefing to the Committees on Appropriations, the House Committee on Education and Labor, and the Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions any time it launches a new experimental site or pilot program within 15 days of launching the experimental site or pilot program. The briefing must include, at a minimum, the goals of the experimental site or pilot program, statutory authority, a list of the specific statutory and regulatory requirements that the Secretary intends to waive, and the legal authority for such waivers. The Department should also provide to the committees any contracts pertaining to the experimental site or pilot program. Additionally, the Department must submit a report to the committees any time it closes an experimental site or pilot program. The report must include, at a minimum, a summary and analysis of the outcomes, an assessment of the challenges and successes, and costs.

*Coding.*—The Committee recognizes that, as the American cybersecurity workforce shortage continues to grow, our nation becomes

increasingly vulnerable to cyber-attacks. The Committee believes it is critical to invest in cyber training for America’s youth across a broad field of computer science curricula, including computer coding. Because computer coding plays an essential role in every industry, the Committee supports efforts by the Department to encourage learning institutions from K–12 to higher education, and career and technical schools to invest in computer science education, including computer coding instruction.

*GAO Study on Skill Training.*—The Committee is concerned that a slow economic recovery and its potential for high levels of long-term unemployment, coupled with the continual shifts in skills sought by employers, pose challenges for the workforce system in the U.S. The Committee recognizes the paramount importance of preparing students and individuals with diverse backgrounds and years of work experience for careers in emerging businesses and industries. Therefore, the Committee requests that the GAO conduct a study that examines: (1) promising programs to assist mid-career workers upskill and/or change professions to better align their career opportunities with emerging business and industry needs; (2) promising practices for creating financing options to help students pay for career and technical education with Federal funds, such as those from Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act, WIOA, and Pell Grant programs; and (3) promising State and/or employer managed programs that provide additional financial support for mid-career workers to pay for career and technical education programs.

Additionally, the Committee is aware that the GAO is mandated to review career and technical education programs under section 219 of Public Law 115–224. The Committee is looking forward to learning about similar information related to this study’s finding about strategies, policies, practices, and challenges to help ensure all students pursue and complete programs aligned to high skill, high wage occupations using the Carl D. Perkins Career and Technical Education Act funds.

*Load Media.*—The Committee encourages the Department to consider using local media in their advertising, including local television, radio broadcast stations, and newspapers to the greatest extent possible. The Committee directs the Department to include in its fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification details on expenditures on local media advertising for the prior two fiscal years.

OFFICE FOR CIVIL RIGHTS

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$130,000,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	130,000,000
Committee Recommendation .....	132,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	+2,000,000
Change from budget request .....	+2,000,000

The Office for Civil Rights (OCR) is responsible for enforcing laws that prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability, and age in all programs and institutions that receive funds from the Department. These laws extend to SEAs, LEAs, and IHEs, including proprietary schools. They also extend to State rehabilitation agencies, libraries, museums, and other institutions receiving Federal funds.

The Committee recommendation includes \$132,000,000, which is \$2,000,000 more than the fiscal year 2020 enacted level and fiscal year 2021 budget request. The Committee directs OCR to use this appropriation to increase its level of full-time equivalent employment in order to effectively and timely investigate complaints; execute and accurately report the civil rights data collection; thoroughly monitor corrective actions of institutions and meet other critical workloads.

*Expulsions and Suspensions in Preschool and Primary Education.*—The Committee continues to request from the Department its overdue report on preschool and primary education expulsions and suspensions. The Committee remains deeply concerned about expulsions and suspensions that occur in preschool settings and K–3 classrooms, particularly given the racial and gender disparities that exist. This is problematic given the research that indicates these practices can adversely affect development, health and education outcomes. The Committee strongly encourages OCR to collect annually, from all elementary and secondary schools receiving Federal financial assistance, data on the number and type of suspension and expulsions of preschool children and K–12 students, disaggregated by race/ethnicity, sex, disability status, and EL status. OCR should also submit to the Committees on Appropriations, the Committee on Education and Labor, and the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions, no later than 180 days after the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter, a report detailing school discipline in all preschool and K–12 classrooms, including the disaggregated data and any disparities by subgroup in disciplinary rates. The report should also include specific recommendations given to schools on expulsions and suspensions, including highlighting evidence-based interventions, providing consumer education specific to each school, and identifying opportunities to improve school climate, including through relevant programs and the provision of technical assistance that helps prevent and severely limit expulsion and suspension practices in preschool settings and K–3 classrooms, eliminate disparities in the provision of discipline, and ensure the safety and well-being of all young children. The Committee requests a briefing within 90 days of enactment of this Act on the progress the Department is making towards these goals.

*Title IX.*—The Committee is concerned with the rates of sexual assault and harassment in schools. The Committee directs OCR to provide a report to further disaggregate data provided in the Civil Rights Data Collection. The report must include an assessment of the FTE status of Title IX coordinators at the LEA and SEA levels, including full-time versus part-time status, and if the Title IX coordinator also oversees other civil rights coordinator positions, including Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, Title II of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. In addition to harassment and bullying data, the report should include data on the prevalence of rape in schools. The Committee directs OCR to submit recommendations, no later than 180 days after enactment of this Act, on actions Congress can take to ensure the Department provides full oversight to prevent, mitigate, and address sexual harassment, assault, and rape in schools.

In addition, the Committee is deeply concerned with the Department's Title IX final rule. This rule represents an unprecedented departure from nearly 20 years of Title IX policy shaped by the Supreme Court and the Department under both Republican and Democratic administrations. The final rule violates the letter and purpose of Title IX, by disproportionately and inappropriately burdening complainants at every stage of the Title IX complaint and investigation process such that the cumulative impact of the Final Rule will have a chilling effect on future complaints of sex-based harassment, in an environment where such harassment is already dramatically underreported. Moreover, the final rule also unfairly and unlawfully subjects sexual harassment complaints to a uniquely burdensome and hostile process that is not required for any other type of student or employee misconduct. When the Department first proposed the rule in 2018, stakeholders submitted nearly 125,000 comments in response, the vast majority of which urged the Department not to move forward with the rule. It is currently being challenged in four separate lawsuits filed by advocacy and direct service organizations and over 18 states and the District of Columbia, with possibly more lawsuits to be filed.

The Committee is also troubled that the Administration would pursue this change during the midst of a national emergency. The final rule will divert schools' already sharply limited resources while they operate remotely toward creating and implementing complex new policies before the new school year commences this fall. When students return to class, the Department should help ensure that school and college environments are not only safe from pathogen, but that they are safe from sexual assault and harassment as well. Therefore, the Committee recommendation includes new bill language preventing the implementation of the Department's final rule, entitled "Nondiscrimination on the Basis of Sex in Education Programs or Activities Receiving Federal Financial Assistance" (85 Fed. Reg. 30,026).

*Closing of Civil Rights Cases.*—The Committee is concerned by the number of civil rights cases, including racial discrimination and sexual harassment, that are closed without any findings of wrongdoing or corrective action, often due to insufficient evidence. The Committee directs the Department to include in its fiscal year 2022 Congressional Budget Justification the following information, broken down by jurisdiction: (1) the number of civil rights complaints evaluated; (2) the number of civil rights complaints investigated; (3) the number of civil rights complaints monitored; (4) the number of civil rights complaints that resulted in enforcement action; and, (5) the number of civil rights complaints not evaluated and the reason for not evaluating.

*Disaggregated Data Collection and Reporting on Bullying.*—The Committee is concerned about rates of bullying of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) students. The Committee recognizes data collections by the Department, OCR and the NCES on student bullying insufficiently reflect the diversity of AAPI sub-ethnic groups. However, AAPIs are diverse, and the U.S. Census Bureau reports data on at least 25 distinct AAPI ethnic groups. The Committee directs the Department to collect and report data on student bullying disaggregated by all racial and ethnic groups and sub-groups identified in the American Community Survey.

*GAO Study on School Discipline and Students.*—The Committee believes teachers and students deserve school environments that are safe, supportive, and conducive to teaching and learning. The Committee is aware of school dress code enforcement disrupting the learning environment of students; various reports of excessive use of force in disciplinary actions at schools across the country; as well as varied interpretations and enforcement of school disturbance laws that have resulted in bodily harm of students. Accordingly, the Committee requests GAO provide a report within 270 days of enactment of this Act to the Committees on Appropriations examining how school dress codes and discipline policies are formulated and executed across the country; examining how students’ civil rights may be infringed by enforcement of dress codes and disturbance laws; and recommendations on how LEAs and SEAs may reform discipline policies to balance both a safe and educational environment.

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Appropriation, fiscal year 2020 .....	\$63,000,000
Budget request, fiscal year 2021 .....	68,019,000
Committee Recommendation .....	64,000,000
Change from enacted level .....	+1,000,000
Change from budget request .....	–4,019,000

The Office of Inspector General (OIG) has authority to inquire into all program and administrative activities of the Department as well as into related activities of grant and contract recipients. It conducts audits and investigations to determine compliance with applicable laws and regulations, to check alleged fraud and abuse, efficiency of operations, and effectiveness of results.

The Committee recommendation includes new bill language allowing the OIG to better respond to unexpected oversight needs by modifying the availability of funds.

In addition, the CARES Act (P.L. 116–136) included \$7,000,000 for audit and oversight activities supported with funds appropriated to the Department in response to COVID–19.

The Committee continues to urge the OIG to ensure its focus remains on the primary missions of the Office. The Committee cautions the Office, when receiving requests from the Department for investigations, to consider the most effective and best use of its resources.

GENERAL PROVISIONS

Sec. 301. The Committee continues a provision related to the implementation of programs of voluntary prayer and meditation in public schools.

(TRANSFER OF FUNDS)

Sec. 302. The Committee modifies a provision regarding transfer authority.

Sec. 303. The Committee continues a provision allowing ESEA funds consolidated for evaluation purposes to be available from July 1, 2021 through September 30, 2022.

Sec. 304. The Committee continues a provision allowing certain institutions to continue to use endowment income for student scholarships.