

Legislative Bulletin.....March 30, 2009

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H.R. ____ — Making technical corrections and conforming changes to the Higher Education Act (*Miller, D-CA*)

Order of Business: The bill is scheduled to be considered on Monday, March 30, 2009, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill.

Summary: H.R. ____ would provide the following changes to the Higher Education Act:

Section 101.

- Would clarify that the foreign nursing schools currently participating in the Title IV programs remain eligible under the pre-Higher Education Opportunity Act (HEOA) eligibility rules.
- Changes an effective date from July 1, 2010 to the date of enactment of HEOA for provisions that made changes to the general definition of an institution of higher education.

Section 201.

- Clarifies that programs should prepare teacher candidates graduating from an undergraduate teacher education program to use modern information, communications, and learning tools to help students in the classroom.

Section 301.

- Clarifies that the Department has the authority to reduce the minimum allotment if there is not enough appropriations to cover the minimum amount for every eligible institution.

Section 401.

- Moves the eligibility for an automatic zero estimated family contribution for certain students from the Pell Grant program to the Needs Analysis section of the law.

Section 402.

- Clarifies that guaranty agencies and lenders are permitted to do financial aid entrance counseling for students.
- Allows for one additional way to get loan rehabilitation for borrowers who have defaulted on their student loans (but have paid nine out of ten consecutive payments on time). Under current law, the actual rehabilitation does not take place until the loan is sold from the guaranty agency to the lender. The current liquidity problems in the student loan industry have made it impossible for lenders to purchase these loans from guaranty agencies. This change will allow the Secretary to accept assignment of defaulted loans from guaranty agencies if the borrower has made enough payments to rehabilitate them. This action will act as the sale to the lender.

Section 404.

- Clarifies the loan purchase authority enacted as part of H.R. 5715, the Ensuring Continued Access to Student Loans Act to allow the Secretary to purchase loans that have previously been rehabilitated from lenders.

Section 406.

- Inserts language relating to automatic zero eligibility for students whose parent or guardian died while serving in the military in Iraq or Afghanistan.
- Ensures that veterans' educational benefits are not counted in determining a veteran's eligibility for federal financial aid beginning in the 2009-2010 academic year.

Section 409.

- Because DoE does not think they will receive enough bides to have a successful auction, this bill provides a one-year delay for the start of the PLUS loan auction. Under current law, DoE is required to implement an auction for the determination of lenders eligible to make PLUS loans to schools participating in the Federal Family Education Program.

Committee Action: The bill has not been introduced.

Administration Position: No Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) is available.

Cost to Taxpayers: There is no CBO score available.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: No committee report is available.

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H.Res. 282 — Recognizing the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel (Fortenberry, R-NE)

Order of Business: The resolution is scheduled to be considered on Monday, March 30, 2009, under a motion to suspend the rules and pass the resolution.

Summary: H.Res. 282 would recognize that the House of Representatives:

- “Recognizes the 30th anniversary of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel, celebrates the treaty's strength and endurance, and commends the extraordinary diplomatic achievement that the treaty exemplifies;
- “Recalls the historic sacrifices sustained by Egypt and Israel in cause of peace and commends the steadfast determination of both nations to sustain their mutual commitment to peace;
- “Calls for the strengthening of economic, diplomatic, and cultural relations between Egypt and Israel;
- “Urges the Governments of Egypt and Israel to strengthen the spirit of cooperation that emerged in 1979 as the Middle East faces new challenges;
- “Seeks to encourage continued United States efforts to foster candid, constructive initiatives to resolve existing conflicts and mitigate current and emerging threats to a just and lasting Middle East peace; and
- “Calls for recognition of the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel as a model mechanism upon which partner nations may build to overcome longstanding barriers to peace and effective mutual cooperation.”

The resolution lists a number of findings including:

- “The peace treaty between Egypt and Israel signed in Washington, DC, on March 26, 1979, set an unprecedented example of reconciliation following decades marked by periods of heightened confrontation and tension, including the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the Suez Crisis of 1956, the War of Attrition along the Suez Canal, and the Arab-Israeli War of 1973;
- “United States diplomatic efforts and initiatives in the aftermath of the 1973 Arab-Israeli War helped build the foundations of a lasting peace between Egypt and Israel;
- “Pursuant to an invitation by Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin, President Anwar al-Sadat became the first Arab leader to visit and recognize Israel on November 20, 1977, when he delivered a historic address before Israel's Parliament, the Knesset, calling for Egypt and Israel to ‘. . . stand together with the . . . boldness of heroes who dedicate themselves to a sublime aim . . . to erect a huge edifice of peace . . . an edifice that . . . serves as a beacon for generations to come’;

- “Prime Minister Menachem Begin and President Sadat demonstrated remarkable character and courage in their willingness to move beyond decades of hostility, bitterness, and mistrust to launch an unprecedented rapprochement without any guarantee as to the potential outcome of their mutual determination to engage in United States-mediated peace talks;
- “Successive administrations worked diligently to facilitate intensive discussions in the hope of achieving a historic diplomatic breakthrough on Middle East peace, and President Jimmy Carter invited the two leaders to Camp David for intensive discussions from September 5-17, 1978;
- “On September 17, 1978, the United States witnessed the signing of two framework agreements between the Governments of Egypt and Israel, ‘A Framework for Peace in the Middle East’ and ‘A Framework for the Conclusion of a Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel’;
- “On March 26, 1979, President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin signed the first treaty between an Arab nation and Israel;
- “The primary features of the peace treaty included the mutual recognition of Egypt and Israel by each other, the end of the state of war between the two nations dating back to the 1948 Arab-Israeli War, the complete withdrawal by Israel of its armed forces and civilians from the Sinai Peninsula, freedom of passage for Israeli ships through the Suez Canal, and recognition of the Strait of Tiran and the Gulf of Aqaba as international waterways;
- United States leadership played a decisive role in enabling Egypt and Israel to set aside longstanding animosities;
- “The conclusion of the treaty between Egypt and Israel set a courageous example of statesmanship in the face of widespread opposition;
- “As a direct result of the peace treaty, the Arab League suspended Egypt from its membership from 1979 until 1989;
- “In 1981, President Sadat was assassinated in Cairo by Egyptian soldiers who belonged to the Gama`ah Islamiyah (Islamic Group) and Egyptian Islamic Jihad;
- “On October 26, 1994, Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin and King Hussein of Jordan followed in the path set by President Sadat and Prime Minister Begin, signing the Israel-Jordan Treaty of Peace;
- “The legacy of the treaty was poignantly echoed at the memorial service of Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, who was assassinated on November 4, 1995;
- “Despite the existence of tensions and grievances, the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel continues to challenge presuppositions about the intransigence of conflict in the Middle East and provides an enduring framework for facilitating dialogue; and
- “Egypt and Israel continue to collaborate in ongoing efforts to address regional difficulties despite the security challenges facing both nations.”

Committee Action: H.Res. 282 was introduced on March 24, 2009 and referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs. No further public action was taken.

Administration Position: No Statement of Administration Policy (SAP) is available.

Cost to Taxpayers: The resolution would not authorize any additional expenditures.

Does the Bill Expand the Size and Scope of the Federal Government?: No.

Does the Bill Contain Any New State-Government, Local-Government, or Private-Sector Mandates?: No.

Does the Bill Comply with House Rules Regarding Earmarks/Limited Tax Benefits/Limited Tariff Benefits?: Though the bill contains no earmarks, and there's no accompanying committee report, the earmarks rule (House Rule XXI, Clause 9(a)) does not apply, by definition, to legislation considered under suspension of the rules.

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