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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

### HOUSE BILL NO. 419

#### BY ERPELDING

AN ACT

RELATING TO STUDENT LOANS; AMENDING CHAPTER 37, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 33-3728, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO CERTAIN DEBT REPORTS AND TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO COUNSELING; AMENDING CHAPTER 37, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDI-TION OF A NEW SECTION 33-3729, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RE-QUIRING INFORMATION BE PROVIDED TO STUDENTS; AMENDING CHAPTER 37, TI-TLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 33-3730, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO LOAN COUNSELING, TO ESTABLISH PRO-VISIONS RELATING TO ENTRANCE AND EXIT COUNSELING; AMENDING CHAPTER 37, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW SECTION 33-3731, IDAHO CODE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO STUDENT LENDING TRANSPARENCY AND TO DEFINE TERMS; AMENDING TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, BY THE ADDITION OF A NEW CHAPTER 58, TITLE 33, IDAHO CODE, TO PROVIDE A CHAPTER HEADING, TO PROVIDE DEFINITIONS, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS CREATING THE IDAHO STU-DENT LOAN REFINANCING AUTHORITY, TO PROVIDE FOR POWERS OF THE BOARD, TO PROVIDE FOR DUTIES OF THE BOARD, TO PROVIDE FOR THE ISSUANCE OF BONDS, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO BOND SECURITY, TO ESTABLISH PROVI-SIONS THAT BONDS ARE NOT PUBLIC DEBT, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO A STATE PLEDGE, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO LIMITED LIABIL-ITY, TO ESTABLISH PROVISIONS RELATING TO AN ANNUAL REPORT, TO PROVIDE FOR STAGGERED TERMS, AND PROVIDING AN EFFECTIVE DATE.

Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Idaho:

SECTION 1. That Chapter 37, Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a <u>NEW SECTION</u>, to be known and designated as Section 33-3728, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

- 33-3728. STUDENT LOANS DEBT REPORTS -- COUNSELING. (1) Student loan debt reports. By January 1 of each year, all public universities and colleges, community colleges and postsecondary professional-technical colleges, all private, nonprofit accredited institutions of higher education in this state, and all proprietary postsecondary institutions governed by the provisions of title 33, chapter 24, Idaho Code, collectively hereinafter referred to as "institutions of higher education," in this state shall provide to the state board of education the average amount of student loan incurred in the previous year by resident undergraduate students enrolled in each institution.
- (2) By March 1 of each year, the state board of education shall do all of the following:
  - (a) Compile the information provided to the state board of education under subsection (1) of this section and, from that information, compute the statewide average amount of student loan debt incurred in the

previous year by resident undergraduate students enrolled in the institutions specified in subsection (1).

- (b) Compare the amount computed under paragraph (a) to the national average amount of student loan debt incurred in the previous year by undergraduate students enrolled in institutions of higher education in the United States.
- (c) Compare the amount computed under paragraph (a) to the statewide average amount of student loan debt incurred in the previous year by undergraduate students in the state with the lowest ratio of statewide average student loan debt to the lowest quintile of state per capita income.
- (d) Submit a report regarding student loan debt incurred in the previous year by resident undergraduate students at the institutions specified in subsection (1) to the joint finance-appropriations committee. The report shall include the information provided to the state board of education under subsection (1), the statewide average amount of student loan debt computed under paragraph (a), and the comparisons described in paragraphs (b) and (c).
- SECTION 2. That Chapter 37, Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a  $\underline{\text{NEW SECTION}}$ , to be known and designated as Section 33-3729, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:
- 33-3729. INFORMATION PROVIDED TO STUDENTS. (1) For purposes of this act, the term "institutions of higher education" shall mean those institutions described in section 33-3728, Idaho Code.
- (2) Each institution of higher education shall provide to a prospective or newly accepted student and to the student's parents clearly outlined and easy-to-understand information pertaining to all of the following:
  - (a) The total cost of attendance at the institution of higher education.
  - (b) The approximate or, if known, the actual total amount of financial aid that the student would receive from the institution of higher education, and the approximate or, if known, the actual total amount of student loan debt that the student would accumulate, over the course of four (4) years if the student were to attend the institution of higher education for four (4) years.
  - (c) Student loan rates, repayment plans, default rates and the actual monthly payment that would be required to pay the student loan debt described in paragraph (b) of this subsection when the loan becomes due.
- (3) Each institution of higher education shall create on its internet site a link providing access to the information described in this section
- SECTION 3. That Chapter 37, Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a  $\underline{\text{NEW SECTION}}$ , to be known and designated as Section 33-3730, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:
- 33-3730. LOAN COUNSELING. (1) Applicability. This section applies to any student loan offered by an institution of higher education or a private lender or recommended to a student by an institution of higher education,

other than a federally funded, federally insured, or federally guaranteed loan for which counseling is required by 20 U.S.C. 1092.

- (2) Entrance counseling. (a) Before a student enters into a student loan agreement, an institution of higher education shall provide the student with comprehensive information on the terms and conditions of a loan and the responsibilities the student has with respect to the loan. The institution shall provide the information during a counseling session conducted in person, on a written form provided to the student that the student signs and returns, or online, with the student acknowledging receipt of the information. The information provided shall include all of the following:
  - (i) To the extent practicable, the effect of accepting the loan to be disbursed on the eligibility of the borrower for other forms of student financial assistance.
  - (ii) How interest accrues and is capitalized during periods when the interest is not paid by the borrower.
  - (iii) The definitions of full-time and half-time enrollment at the institution of higher education, during regular terms and intersession terms, if applicable, and the consequences of not maintaining full-time or half-time enrollment.
  - (iv) The importance of contacting the appropriate office at the institution of higher education if the borrower withdraws before completing his or her program of study so that the institution can provide counseling under subsection (4).
  - (v) Sample monthly repayment amounts based on a range of levels of indebtedness.
  - (vi) The obligation of the borrower to repay the full amount of the loan, irrespective of whether the borrower completes his or her program of study at the institution.
  - (vii) The likely consequences of default on the loan, including adverse credit reports, delinquent debt collection procedures and litigation.
  - (viii) Whether the student has reached the limit on his or her federal student loan opportunities.
  - (ix) The name of, and contact information for, an individual the borrower may contact if he or she has any questions about the borrower's rights and responsibilities or the terms and conditions of the loan.
  - (x) How a student or any member of the public may file a complaint about a lender with the federal consumer financial protection bureau by calling a toll-free telephone number, or by completing a complaint form, which may be obtained on the bureau's internet site. The toll-free telephone number and internet site address of the bureau shall be included.
  - (b) In conjunction with providing information under paragraph (a), the institution of higher education shall also do all of the following:
    - (i) Clearly distinguish private loans from federal loans in individual financial aid awards by stating, for any private loans included by the institution as part of the institution's award package, all of the following:
      - 1. Whether the rate is fixed or variable.

- An explanation that private student loan lenders can offer variable interest rates that can increase or decrease over time, depending on market conditions.
  - 3. An explanation that private student loans have a range of interest rates and fees and students should determine the interest rate of, and any fees associated with, the private student loan included in their financial aid award package before accepting the loan.
  - 4. An explanation that students should contact the lender of the private student loan or their institution's financial aid office if they have any questions about a private student loan.
  - 5. An explanation that the interest rate on a private loan may depend on the borrower's credit rating.
  - (ii) If the institution of higher education provides a private loan lender list, provide general information about the loans available through the lender and disclose the basis for each lender's inclusion on the list. The institution shall also disclose with the list that the student may choose any lender.
  - (C) A lender may not accept a final and complete application for a private student loan from an applicant, or assess any fees upon an applicant, without first receiving certification from the applicant's institution of higher education that the applicant has received counseling from the institution under paragraphs (a) and (b) of this subsection and that the counseling was conducted in person, unless the certification specified that the applicant elected to receive the counseling in a manner other than in person. (ii) The certification required by subparagraph (i) of this paragraph shall be signed by the applicant and the institutional counselor, and shall include the date of the counseling and the name, address and telephone number of both the counselor and the applicant. An electronic facsimile copy of the counseling certification satisfies the requirement of this subparagraph. The lender shall maintain the certification in an accurate, reproducible and accessible format for the term of the student loan.
  - (3) Exit counseling.

- (a) As close as practicable to the date that a student graduates from, transfers from withdraws from, or otherwise completes his or her program of study at the institution of higher education, the institution shall provide the student with information relating to all of the following:
  - (i) Repayment plans that are available, including a description of the different features of each plan and sample information showing the average anticipated monthly payments, and the difference in interest paid and total payments, under each plan.
  - (ii) Debt management strategies designed to facilitate the repayment of indebtedness.
  - (iii) The options to prepay each loan, pay each loan on a shorter schedule or change repayment plans.

- (iv) The likely consequences of default on the loan, including adverse credit reports, delinquent debt collection procedures and litigation.
- (v) The effects of consolidation on a borrower's underlying loan benefits.
- (vi) Grace periods, loan forgiveness, cancellation and deferment opportunities.
- (vii) The borrower benefit programs of different lenders.
- (viii) The tax benefits that may be available to borrowers.
- (ix) How to enroll in income-based repayment.

- (b) With respect to a student who leaves an institution of higher education without the knowledge of the institution, the institution shall attempt to provide the information described in paragraph (a) to the student in writing.
- (5) Fee. An institution of higher education may assess a reasonable fee to the lender to defray the cost of counseling under this section in an amount not exceeding fifty dollars (\$50.00).
- SECTION 4. That Chapter 37, Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a  $\underline{\text{NEW SECTION}}$ , to be known and designated as Section 33-3731, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:
- 33-3731. STUDENT LENDING TRANSPARENCY. (1) For purposes of this act, the following terms shall have the following meanings:
  - (a) "Higher education expenses" includes all of the following: tuition and fees; books and supplies; and room and board.
  - (b) "Private student loan" means a loan issued by a private lending institution for the purpose of paying for or financing higher education expenses.
  - (c) "Private lending institution" means any private entity that itself or through an affiliate makes available student loans to pay for or finance higher education expenses.
  - (d) "Student borrower" means any individual who borrows money from a private lending institution to finance higher education expenses.
- (2) The state board of education shall compile data related to private student loans for the purpose of comparing private lending institutions' student loan interest rates and repayment plans, including all of the following: policies relating to deferment and forbearance; loan default policies and penalties; any other information that the state board of education deems relevant for the purpose of creating a list of private lending institutions that provide the lowest rates and best repayment options on student loans.
  - (3) (a) Using the data compiled under subsection (2) of this section, the state board of education shall create and maintain a list of private lending institutions that provide the lowest rates and best repayment options on student loans.
  - (b) In addition to the list under paragraph (a) of this subsection, the state board of education shall compile a list of the ten (10) best private lending institutions based on rates and policies that are most favorable to the student borrower. The state board of education may also consider the private lending institutions' policies for allowing a

student borrower to borrow more than ten percent (10%) over the student borrower's total cost of higher education expenses when determining if a private lending institution should be placed on this list.

- (4) The state board of education shall place the lists created and compiled under subsection (3) of this section at an easily accessible location on the its internet site. The state board of education shall update its internet site on a monthly basis to ensure that the student loan information in these lists is current and accurate. Information pertaining to lending institutions that do not make the list compiled under subsection (3) of this section shall also be posted on the state board of education's internet site and those lending institutions that provide the worst rates and strictest repayment options shall be clearly indicated.
- (5) The state board of education may satisfy its duties under this section through a designee or third-party contractor.
- SECTION 5. That Title 33, Idaho Code, be, and the same is hereby amended by the addition thereto of a <a href="NEW CHAPTER">NEW CHAPTER</a>, to be known and designated as Chapter 58, Title 33, Idaho Code, and to read as follows:

# CHAPTER 58 IDAHO STUDENT LOAN REFINANCING AUTHORITY

33-5801. DEFINITIONS. In this chapter:

- (1) "Authority" means the Idaho student loan refinancing authority.
- (2) "Refinancing board" means the governing board of the authority.
- (3) "Qualified education loan" has the meaning given in 26 U.S.C. 221(d).

## 33-5802. CREATION AND ORGANIZATION OF AUTHORITY.

- (1) (a) There is created an independent authority, which is a public body corporate and politic, to be known as the "Idaho Student Loan Refinancing Authority." The members of the board shall consist of all of the following:
  - (i) One (1) member of the majority party in each house of the legislature.
  - (ii) One (1) member of the minority party in each house of the legislature.
  - (iii) One (1) undergraduate student enrolled at least half-time and in good academic standing at public college or university in this state and who is at least eighteen (18) years old and a resident of this state.
  - (iv) One (1) student enrolled at least half-time and in good academic standing at a professional-technical college who is at least eighteen (18) years old and a resident of this state.
  - (v) One (1) undergraduate student enrolled at least half-time and in good academic standing at a private, nonprofit institution of higher education located in this state who is at least eighteen (18) years old and a resident of this state.
  - (vi) Two (2) members who have at least ten (10) years experience in making qualified education loans or loan refinancing, but any person having a financial interest in or whose employer is primar-

 ily engaged in the business of making qualified education loans is not eligible for appointment under this chapter, and any member appointed under this subparagraph who acquires such an interest while serving as a member shall resign from the board.

- (b) (i) The members specified in subsection (1) (a) (i) and (ii) shall be appointed as are the members of standing committees in their respective houses.
  - (ii) The members specified in subsection (1) (a) (iii) through (v) shall be nominated by the governor, and with the advice and consent of the senate appointed, for two (2) year terms.
- (c) The members specified in subsection (1)(a)(vi) shall be nominated by the governor, and with the advice and consent of the senate appointed for three (3) year terms.
- (2) If a student member of the board appointed under subsection (1)(a)(iii) through (v) loses his or her student status upon which the appointment was based, he or she ceases to be a member of the board upon the appointment of a qualified successor to the board. A student member who loses his or her student status solely because he or she graduates from an institution of higher education may complete his or her current term of the board.
- (3) The members of the board shall annually elect a chairperson and may elect other officers as they consider appropriate. A majority of the members of the board constitutes a quorum for the purpose of conducting its business and exercising its powers and for all other purposes, notwithstanding the existence of any vacancies. Action may be taken by the board upon a vote of a majority of the voting members present.
- (4) A member of the board may not be compensated for his or her services but shall be reimbursed for actual and necessary expenses, including travel expenses, incurred in the performance of his or her duties.
- (5) No cause of action of any nature may arise against and no civil liability may be imposed upon a member of the board for any act or omission in the performance of his or her powers and duties under this chapter, unless the person asserting liability proves that the act or omission constitutes willful misconduct.
- (6) The board shall appoint a chief executive officer who shall not be a member of the board and who shall serve at the pleasure of the board. The chief executive officer shall receive such compensation as the board fixes. The chief executive officer or other person designated by resolution of the board shall keep a record of the proceedings of the authority and shall be custodian of all books, documents, and papers filed with the authority, the minute book or journal of the authority and its official seal. The chief executive officer or other person may cause copies to be made of all minutes and other records and documents of the authority and may give certificates under the official seal of the authority to the effect that such copies are true copies, and all persons dealing with the authority may rely upon such certificates.

33-5803. POWERS OF THE BOARD. The board shall have all the powers necessary or convenient to carry out the purposes and provisions of this chapter. In addition to all other powers granted the board under this chapter, the board may specifically:

- (1) Adopt, amend, and repeal any bylaws, policies, and procedures for the regulation of its affairs and the conduct of its business.
  - (2) Have a seal and alter the seal at pleasure.
  - (3) Maintain an office.
  - (4) Sue and be sued.

- (5) Accept gifts, grants, loans, or other contributions from private or public sources.
- (6) Establish the authority's annual budget and monitor the fiscal management of the authority.
- (7) Execute contracts and other instruments required for the operation of the authority.
- (8) Employ any officers, agents, and employees that it may require and determine their qualifications, duties, and compensation.
- (9) Request the issuance of notes, bonds, and other obligations, from the Idaho housing and finance authority, provided that such notes, bonds or other obligations shall not be deemed general obligations of the state of Idaho.
  - (10) Make loans and provide grants.
- (11) Incur debt, provided that such debt shall be considered the debt of the authority only and shall not be considered debt of the state of Idaho.
  - (12) Procure liability insurance.
- 33-5804. DUTIES OF THE BOARD. The board shall develop and implement a program under which state residents may refinance qualified education loans. The board shall develop the program to include all of the following:
- (1) The authority shall provide a loan to an eligible individual to pay all or part of the individual's qualified education loans.
- (2) The authority may only issues loans under the program that satisfy the exception to discharge under 11 U.S.C. 523(8).
- (3) The authority shall establish eligibility criteria to participate in the program that is substantially similar to the criteria used by private lenders in the state to evaluate whether an individual qualifies for an unsecured personal loan at market rates.
- (4) The board shall set the interest rate on loans made under the program to be as low as possible but still sufficient to fully pay all expenses of the program and to provide necessary reserves, as determined by the board.
- 33-5805. ISSUANCE OF BONDS. (1) The authority may issue bonds for any corporate purpose. All bonds are negotiable for all purposes, notwithstanding their payment from a limited source.
- (2) Except as may otherwise be expressly provided by the authority, every issue of its notes or bonds shall be general obligations of the authority payable out of any revenues or moneys of the authority, subject only to any agreements with the holders of particular notes or bonds pledging any particular receipts or revenues.
- (3) All bonds issued by the authority are negotiable investment securities under the laws of Idaho.
- (4) The authority may not issue bonds unless the issuance is first authorized by a bond resolution. Bonds shall bear the dates, mature at the times not exceeding twenty (20) years from their dates of issue, bear inter-

est at the rates, be payable at the times, be in the denominations, be in the form, carry the registration and conversion privileges, be executed in the manner, be payable in lawful money of the United States at the places, and be subject to the terms of redemption, that the bond resolution provides. The bonds shall be executed by the manual or facsimile signatures of the officers of the authority designated by the board. The bonds may be sold at public or private sale at the price, in the manner, and at the time, determined by the board. Pending preparation of definitive bonds, the authority may issue interim receipts or certificates that shall be exchanged for the definitive bonds.

- (5) The board may include in a bond resolution provisions, which shall be a part of the contract with the holders of the bonds that are authorized by the bond resolution, regarding any of the following:
  - (a) Pledging or assigning specified assets or revenues of the authority.
  - (b) Setting aside reserves or sinking funds, and the regulation, investment, and disposition of these funds.
  - (c) Limitations on the purpose to which or the investments in which the proceeds of the sale of any issue of bonds may be applied.
  - (d) Limitations on the issuance of additional bonds, the terms upon which additional bonds may be issued and secured, and the terms upon which additional bonds may rank on a parity with, or be subordinate or superior to, other bonds.
  - (e) Funding, refunding, advance refunding, or purchasing outstanding bonds.
  - (f) Procedures, if any, by which the terms of any contract with bondholders may be amended, the amount of bonds the holders of which must consent to the amendment, and the manner in which this consent may be given.
  - (g) Defining the acts or omissions to act that constitute a default in the duties of the authority to the bondholders, and providing the rights and remedies of the bondholders in the event of a default.
  - (h) Other matters relating to the bonds that the board considers desirable.
- (6) Neither the members of the board nor any person executing the bonds is liable personally on the bonds or subject to any personal liability or accountability by reason of the issuance of the bonds, unless the personal liability or accountability is the result of willful misconduct.
- 33-5806. BOND SECURITY. The authority may secure bonds by a trust agreement, trust indenture, indenture of mortgage, or deed of trust by and between the authority and one or more corporate trustees. A bond resolution providing for the issuance of bonds so secured shall mortgage, pledge, assign, or grant security interests in some or all of the revenues to be received by, and property of, the authority and may contain those provisions for protecting and enforcing the rights and remedies of the bondholders that are reasonable and proper and not in violation of law. A bond resolution may contain other provisions determined by the board to be reasonable and proper for the security of the bondholders.

33-5807. BONDS NOT PUBLIC DEBT. (1) The state of Idaho is not liable on bonds and the bonds are not a debt of the state. All bonds shall contain a statement to this effect on the face of the bond. A bond issue does not, directly, indirectly or contingently obligate the state or a political subdivision of the state to levy any tax or make any appropriation for payment of the bonds. Nothing in this section prevents the authority from pledging its full faith and credit to the payment of bonds.

- (2) Nothing in this chapter authorizes the authority to create a debt of the state, and all bonds issued by the authority are payable, and shall state that they are payable, solely from the funds pledged for their payment in accordance with the bond resolution authorizing their issuance or in any trust indenture or mortgage or deed of trust executed as security for the bonds. The state is not liable for the payment of the principal of or interest on a bond or for the performance of any pledge, mortgage, obligation or agreement that may be undertaken by the authority. The breach of any pledge, mortgage, obligation, or agreement undertaken by the authority does not impose pecuniary liability upon the state or a charge upon its general credit or against its taxing power.
- 33-5808. STATE PLEDGE. The state of Idaho pledges to and agrees with the bondholders, and persons that enter into contracts with the authority under this chapter, that the state will not limit or alter the rights vested in the authority by this chapter before the authority has fully met and discharged the bonds, and any interest due on the bonds, and has fully performed its contracts, unless adequate provision is made by law for the protection of the bondholders or those entering into contracts with the authority.
- 33-5809. LIABILITY LIMITED. Neither the state nor any political subdivision of the state, nor any officer, employee or agent of the state or a political subdivision of the state who is acting within the scope of employment or agency, is liable for any debt, obligation, act, or omission of the authority.
- 33-5810. ANNUAL REPORT. (1) Annually, the board shall submit to the secretary of the senate and the chief clerk of the house of representatives, for distribution to the legislature, a report on the activities of the authority, including all of the following:
  - (a) Its operations, accomplishments, goals, and objectives.
  - (b) A statement of income and expenses for the fiscal year.
  - (c) Its assets and liabilities at the end of its fiscal year.
  - (d) A schedule of its bonds and notes outstanding at the end of its fiscal year, together with a statement of the amounts redeemed and incurred during such fiscal year.
- (2) The authority, annually on January 15, shall file with the state department of administration and the legislative council a complete and current listing of all forms, reports, and papers required by the authority to be completed by any person, other than a governmental body, as a condition of obtaining the approval of the authority or for any other reason. The authority shall attach a blank copy of each such form, report or paper to the listing.

SECTION 6. STAGGERED TERMS. Notwithstanding the length of terms specified for the members of the board of the Idaho student loan refinancing authority as provided for in this act of the five (5) members appointed pursuant to section 33-5802(1)(a)(iii) through (vi), Idaho Code, one (1) of the initial members shall be appointed for a term expiring on July 1, 2016, two (2) of the initial members shall be appointed for terms expiring on July 1, 2017, and the remaining two (2) initial members shall be appointed for terms expiring on July 1, 2018.

9 SECTION 7. This act shall be in full force and effect on and after January 1, 2015.