

117TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 4666

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to modernize and improve the public service loan forgiveness program, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 22, 2021

Mr. PANETTA (for himself, Mr. CUELLAR, and Mrs. MCBATH) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and Labor

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to modernize and improve the public service loan forgiveness program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Public Service Loan
5 Forgiveness Modernization Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. REPAYMENT PLAN FOR PUBLIC SERVICE EMPLOY-**
7 **EES.**

8 Section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of 1965
9 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(m)) is amended—

1 (1) by redesignating paragraph (3) as para-
2 graph (4); and

3 (2) by inserting after paragraph (2), the fol-
4 lowing:

5 “(3) PROGRAM MODERNIZATION.—

6 “(A) DATABASE OF PUBLIC SERVICE EM-
7 PLOYERS.—

8 “(i) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Sec-
9 retary, in consultation with the Commis-
10 sioner of the Internal Revenue Service,
11 shall establish and regularly update a com-
12 prehensive database that identifies—

13 “(I) each qualified public service
14 employer; and

15 “(II) each position offered by
16 such employer that is a public service
17 job.

18 “(ii) ACCESSIBILITY.—The database
19 established under clause (i) shall be made
20 available in an easily searchable format on
21 a publicly accessible website of the Depart-
22 ment of Education and via a free and se-
23 cure mobile software application.

24 “(B) EMPLOYER SELF-CERTIFICATION.—

1 “(i) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary
2 shall establish a process through which an
3 employer may electronically submit to the
4 Secretary a certification that the employer
5 is a qualified public service employer.

6 “(ii) SECRETARIAL REVIEW AND
7 VERIFICATION.—The Secretary shall re-
8 view each self-certification submitted under
9 clause (i) to verify whether the employer
10 concerned is a qualified public service em-
11 ployer.

12 “(iii) PSLF CERTIFICATION SEAL.—
13 An employer verified by the Secretary
14 under clause (ii) shall receive permission to
15 use, for informational and marketing pur-
16 poses, a graphic seal-of-approval developed
17 by the Secretary to indicate the employer’s
18 status as a qualified public service em-
19 ployer.

20 “(C) CERTIFICATION OF EMPLOYMENT.—

21 “(i) FORMS AND SIGNATURES.—The
22 Secretary shall ensure that any forms re-
23 quired to certify a borrower’s employment
24 in a public service job are available to bor-
25 rowers and employers—

1 “(I) on a publicly accessible
2 website of the Department of Edu-
3 cation;

4 “(II) via a free and secure mobile
5 software application; and

6 “(III) in traditional hard copy
7 format.

8 “(ii) ELECTRONIC SIGNATURE AND
9 SUBMISSION.—The Secretary shall estab-
10 lish a process that enables borrowers and
11 employers—

12 “(I) to electronically sign any
13 forms required to certify a borrower’s
14 employment in a public service job;
15 and

16 “(II) to submit such forms to the
17 Department of Education through an
18 online portal or via a free and secure
19 mobile software application.

20 “(iii) NOTICE OF RECERTIFI-
21 CATION.—In the case of a borrower who
22 has previously submitted an annual certifi-
23 cation of employment under this section,
24 the Secretary shall provide notice to the
25 borrower of the option to recertify such

1 employment not later than 60 days before
2 the expiration of the one year period fol-
3 lowing the date of the borrower's most re-
4 cently submitted employment certification.
5 The Secretary shall provide such notice to
6 a borrower via email and regular mail.

7 “(D) STATEMENT OF QUALIFYING PAY-
8 MENTS.—On an annual basis, the Secretary
9 shall provide to each borrower of an eligible
10 Federal Direct Loan who has submitted an an-
11 nual certification of employment under this sec-
12 tion the following information:

13 “(i) The number of monthly payments
14 made by the borrower on each eligible Fed-
15 eral Direct Loan of the borrower.

16 “(ii) The number of such payments
17 that qualify as monthly payments under
18 paragraph (1)(A).

19 “(iii) The number of monthly pay-
20 ments under paragraph (1)(A) remaining
21 on such loan before the borrower is eligible
22 for loan cancellation under paragraph (2).

23 “(E) DEFINITIONS.—In this paragraph:

24 “(i) The term ‘Secretary’ means the
25 Secretary of Education acting through the

1 Chief Operating Officer of the Office of
2 Federal Student Aid.

3 “(ii) The term ‘qualified public service
4 employer’ means an employer that offers
5 employment in a position that is a public
6 service job.”.

7 **SEC. 3. APPLICATION PROCESS FOR TEMPORARY EX-**
8 **PANDED PUBLIC SERVICE LOAN FORGIVE-**
9 **NESS.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provi-
11 sion of law, the Secretary of Education shall not require
12 a borrower to apply for and be denied loan cancellation
13 under section 455(m) of the Higher Education Act of
14 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1087e(m)) as a condition of eligibility
15 for loan forgiveness under the programs specified in sub-
16 section (b).

17 (b) PROGRAMS SPECIFIED.—The programs specified
18 in this subsection are the programs of student loan for-
19 giveness commonly known as “Temporary Expanded Pub-
20 lic Service Loan Forgiveness” established under the fol-
21 lowing provisions of law:

22 (1) Section 313 of the Department of Defense
23 and Labor, Health and Human Services, and Edu-
24 cation Appropriations Act, 2019 and Continuing Ap-
25 propriations Act, 2019 (Public Law 115–245).

1 (2) Section 315 of the Consolidated Appropria-
2 tions Act, 2018 (Public Law 115–141).

3 (c) ONLINE HELP TOOL.—Not later than 180 days
4 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary
5 of Education shall develop, and make available on a pub-
6 licly accessible website, an online tool designed to help bor-
7 rowers—

8 (1) learn more about the Temporary Expanded
9 Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program;

10 (2) determine their eligibility for forgiveness
11 under the program; and

12 (3) identify any requirements for participation
13 in the program, including any application require-
14 ments.

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