

119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 954

To amend the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act with respect to certain funding, testing, and evaluation requirements and to permanently authorize an appropriation for such Act.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 4, 2025

Mr. MOOLENAAR introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

A BILL

To amend the Scholarships for Opportunity and Results Act with respect to certain funding, testing, and evaluation requirements and to permanently authorize an appropriation for such Act.

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 “SOAR Permanent Au-
5 thorization Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS TO SCHOLARSHIPS FOR OPPOR-**
 2 **TUNITY AND RESULTS ACT.**

3 (a) CHANGE IN ACCREDITATION REQUIREMENTS.—
 4 Section 3007(a)(5)(A)(i)(I) of the Scholarships for Oppor-
 5 tunity and Results Act (sec. 38–1853.07(a)(5)(A)(i)(I),
 6 D.C. Official Code) is amended to read as follows:

7 “(I) is fully accredited by an ac-
 8 crediting body with jurisdiction in the
 9 District of Columbia or that is recog-
 10 nized by the Student and Visitor Ex-
 11 change English Language Program
 12 administered by U.S. Immigration
 13 and Customs Enforcement; or”.

14 (b) REMOVAL OF STUDENT ACADEMIC ASSISTANCE
 15 LIMIT.—

16 (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 3007(b) of such Act
 17 (sec. 38–1853.07 (b), D.C. Official Code) is amend-
 18 ed—

19 (A) in the header, by striking “AND PA-
 20 RENTAL ASSISTANCE” and inserting “, PAREN-
 21 TAL ASSISTANCE, AND STUDENT ACADEMIC
 22 ASSISTANCE”;

23 (B) in the matter preceding paragraph (1),
 24 by striking “\$2,000,000” and inserting
 25 “\$2,200,000”; and

26 (C) by adding at the end the following:

1 “(3) The expenses of providing tutoring service
2 to participating eligible students that need additional
3 academic assistance. If there are insufficient funds
4 to provide tutoring services to all such students in
5 a year, the eligible entity shall give priority in such
6 year to students who previously attended an elemen-
7 tary school or secondary school identified as one of
8 the lowest-performing schools under the District of
9 Columbia’s accountability system.”.

10 (2) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS.—Section 3007
11 of such Act (sec. 38–1853.07, D.C. Official Code) is
12 amended—

13 (A) by striking subsection (e) and redesignig-
14 nating subsection (d) as subsection (c); and

15 (B) in subsection (c), as so redesignated by
16 paragraph (A)—

17 (i) in paragraph (2)(B), by striking
18 “subsections (b) and (c)” and inserting
19 “subsection (b)”; and

20 (ii) in paragraph (3), by striking
21 “subsections (b) and (c)” and inserting
22 “subsection (b)”.

23 (c) CHANGE IN STANDARDIZED TESTING REQUIRE-
24 MENTS.—Section 3008(h) of such Act (sec. 38–
25 1853.08(h), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

1 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “section
2 3009(a)(2)(A)(i)” and inserting “section 3009(a)”;

3 (2) by amending paragraph (2) to read as fol-
4 lows:

5 “(2) ADMINISTRATION OF TESTS.—The Insti-
6 tute of Education Sciences may administer assess-
7 ments to students participating in the evaluation
8 under section 3009(a) for the purpose of conducting
9 the evaluation under such section.”; and

10 (3) in paragraph (3), by striking “the nation-
11 ally norm-referenced standardized test described in
12 paragraph (2)” and inserting “a nationally norm-
13 referenced standardized test”.

14 (d) CHANGE IN EVALUATION FREQUENCY AND
15 STANDARDS.—Section 3009(a) of such Act (sec. 38-
16 1853.09(a), D.C. Official Code) is amended—

17 (1) in paragraph (1)(A), by striking “annually”
18 and inserting “regularly”;

19 (2) in paragraph (2)—

20 (A) by amending subparagraph (A)(i) to
21 read as follows:

22 “(i) is rigorous; and”; and

23 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “im-
24 pact of the program” and all that follows
25 through the end of the subparagraph and in-

1 serting “impact of the program on academic
2 progress and educational attainment.”;

3 (3) in paragraph (3)—

4 (A) in the header, by striking “ON EDU-
5 CATION” and inserting “OF EDUCATION”;

6 (B) in subparagraph (A)—

7 (i) by inserting “the academic
8 progress of” after “assess”; and

9 (ii) by striking “in each of grades 3”
10 and all that follows through the end of the
11 subparagraph and inserting “; and”;

12 (C) by striking subparagraph (B); and

13 (D) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as
14 subparagraph (B); and

15 (4) in paragraph (4)—

16 (A) in subparagraph (A)—

17 (i) by striking “A comparison of the
18 academic achievement of participating eli-
19 gible students who use an opportunity
20 scholarship on the measurements described
21 in paragraph (3)(B) to the academic
22 achievement” and inserting “The academic
23 progress of participating eligible students
24 who use an opportunity scholarship com-
25 pared to the academic progress”; and

1 (ii) by inserting “, which may include
2 students” after “students with similar
3 backgrounds”;

4 (B) in subparagraph (B), by striking “in-
5 creasing the satisfaction of such parents and
6 students with their choice” and inserting “those
7 parents’ and students’ satisfaction with the pro-
8 gram”;

9 (C) by striking subparagraphs (D) through
10 (F) and inserting the following:

11 “(D) The high school graduation rates,
12 college enrollment rates, college persistence
13 rates, and college graduation rates of partici-
14 pating eligible students who use an opportunity
15 scholarship compared with the rates of public
16 school students described in subparagraph (A),
17 to the extent practicable.

18 “(E) The college enrollment rates, college
19 persistence rates, and college graduation rates
20 of students who participated in the program as
21 the result of winning the Opportunity Scholar-
22 ship Program lottery compared to the enroll-
23 ment, persistence, and graduation rates for stu-
24 dents who entered but did not win such lottery
25 and who, as a result, served as the control

1 group for previous evaluations of the program
2 under this division. Nothing in this subpara-
3 graph may be construed to waive section
4 3004(a)(3)(A)(iii) with respect to any such stu-
5 dent.

6 “(F) The safety of the schools attended by
7 participating eligible students who use an op-
8 portunity scholarship compared with the schools
9 attended by public school students described in
10 subparagraph (A), to the extent practicable.”;
11 and

12 (D) in subparagraph (G), by striking
13 “achievement” and inserting “progress”.

14 (e) PERMANENT AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIA-
15 TION.—Section 3014 of such Act (sec. 38–1853.14, D.C.
16 Official Code) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (a), by striking “\$60,000,000
18 for fiscal year 2012 and for each fiscal year through
19 fiscal year 2023” and inserting “\$75,000,000 for
20 fiscal year 2024 and for each succeeding fiscal
21 year”; and

22 (2) in subsection (b), by striking
23 “\$60,000,000” and inserting “\$75,000,000”.

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