

December 2, 2013

Honorable Elijah E. Cummings
Ranking Member
Committee on Oversight and Government Reform
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representative Cummings:

We are writing in support of your bill, the *Net Price Calculator Improvement Act*. Net price calculators, required by law on almost all college websites since October 2011, are online tools that provide early, individualized estimates of what a specific college will cost *after* grants and scholarships. This early information about college costs and financial aid can help prospective college students and their families look beyond intimidating “sticker prices” and gain a better understanding about which schools they might be able to afford. However, our [research](#) has found that many net price calculators are difficult for students and families to find, use, and compare.

The *Net Price Calculator Improvement Act* would make college net price calculators more useful and accessible by building on existing Department of Education guidance for where they should be located on college websites, how they incorporate veteran benefits, and what results the calculators must provide. Additionally, the bill protects students’ privacy by prohibiting any personally identifiable information from being sold or made available to third parties.

The bill also allows the Department of Education to create a website that lets students answer one set of questions and obtain net price estimates for multiple colleges without having to find and fill out a different calculator on each college’s website. The content and design of that central website would be reviewed and consumer-tested before being finalized, to ensure that it meets the needs of students and families. The bill does not alter the ability of each college to create and maintain a customized net price calculator as long as it meets the minimum requirements.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue.

Sincerely,



Lauren Asher
President