



Fair College Admissions for Students Act

Bill Summary

All students deserve an equitable opportunity to gain admissions to our institutions of higher education. Yet many highly selective colleges and universities give preferential treatment to applicants with legacy status or whose families have donated to the university. Legacy admissions can take up to 10 to 25% of available slots at top universities. Some estimates indicate that applying as a legacy student can double to quadruple one's chances of getting into a highly selective university. At Harvard, legacy applicants are five times more likely to be accepted than non-legacy applicants.

Historically, the origin of legacy admissions policies has antisemitic and anti-immigrant roots and has served to exclude the descendants of the very enslaved African Americans who built and maintained many highly selective colleges and universities. **Today, the continued use of legacy and donor admissions policies overwhelmingly benefits white, wealthy students while creating yet another systemic barrier to accessing higher education for low-income students, Black and brown students, and first-generation students.** In the wake of the Supreme Court's recent devastating decision to overturn the use of race-conscious admissions policies, it is now more important than ever to cultivate diverse classrooms and to promote equitable pathways to higher education for Black and brown students.

To this end, Congressman Bowman (NY-16) and Senator Merkley (OR) reintroduced the ***Fair College Admissions for Students Act*** to promote equity in the college admissions process. Specifically, the bill would amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to **prohibit institutions of higher education participating in Federal student aid programs from giving admissions preference to students with legacy or donor status.**

The legislation was introduced with the following original cosponsors: Senators Chris Van Hollen and Alex Padilla and Representatives Cori Bush, Troy Carter, Greg Casar, Judy Chu, Yvette Clarke, Emanuel Cleaver II, Madeleine Dean, Rosa L. DeLauro, Dwight Evans, Maxwell Frost, Jesús "Chuy" García, Raúl Grijalva, Eleanor Holmes Norton, Jared Huffman, Jonathan Jackson, Sheila Jackson Lee, Sara Jacobs, Pramila Jayapal, Henry Johnson, Ro Khanna, Andy Kim, Barbara Lee, Summer Lee, Jim McGovern, Grace Meng, Kweisi Mfume, Jerry Nadler, Donald Norcross, Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, Mark Pocan, Ayanna Pressley, Linda T. Sánchez, Jan Schakowsky, Adam Schiff, Mark Takano, Rashida Tlaib, Jill Tokuda, Ritchie Torres, Nydia Velázquez

The *Fair College Admissions for Students Act* is endorsed by the following organizations: Center for Law and Social Policy (CLASP), The National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP),

Thurgood Marshall College Fund, National Education Association (NEA), The Education Trust, EdMobilizer, Education Reform Now, All4Ed, National College Attainment Network (NCAN), Association of Latino Administrators and Superintendents (ALAS), Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities (HACU), Institute for Higher Education Policy (IHEP), The Institute for College Access & Success (TICAS), New America Higher Education Program, Hildreth Institute, Richard D. Kahlenberg