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## College Affordability Act 5 Things To Know

House Education and Labor Committee Chairman Bobby Scott (D-VA) released the College Affordability Act (CAA) on October 15, 2019 as a proposal for comprehensive reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (HEA). Although HEA is due for reauthorization every five years, Congress has not passed comprehensive reauthorization since 2008, **making the current period the longest to date between updates to this critical legislation.**

HEA establishes the framework for the federal government's involvement in higher education, including financial aid programs (e.g., Pell grants for low-income students and student loans), accreditation requirements, and civil rights protections. Among the many areas the CAA covers, if passed the bill would:

- 1. Make college more affordable** by increasing the maximum Pell grant amount by \$625, tying the grant's amount to inflation, and increasing the total number of grants a student could receive from 12 to 14. The CAA would also establish a federal-state partnership to cover the cost of tuition at community colleges.
- 2. Simplify the FAFSA and streamline the loan repayment process.** The bill would also protect the Public Service Loan Forgiveness program, which makes it possible for graduates who enter public service fields like teaching, public safety, and government service to have their remaining loan amounts forgiven after 10 years of keeping up with their student loan payments.
- 3. Strengthen protections for students** against predatory lenders and institutions that provide false information about their low-quality programs.
- 4. Establish an emergency fund** to help students cover unexpected costs like medical bills and car repairs that can lead to students stopping out from their college programs.
- 5. Support student parents** by quadrupling funding for a grant program colleges can use to provide on-campus child care. This is particularly important as nearly one-in-four college students are parents.

**Take Action:** Now that the CAA has passed out of committee, it awaits a vote on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives. [Contact your Representative](#) to demand action on this long-overdue legislation to make college more accessible and affordable for today's students.