

H.R. 7683, Respecting the First Amendment on Campus Act

As ordered reported by the House Committee on Education and the Workforce on March 21, 2024

By Fiscal Year, Millions of Dollars	2024	2024-2029	2024-2034
Direct Spending (Outlays)	0	*	*
Revenues	0	0	0
Increase or Decrease (-) in the Deficit	0	*	*
Spending Subject to Appropriation (Outlays)	*	*	not estimated
Increases <i>net direct spending</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035?	No	Statutory pay-as-you-go procedures apply? Yes	
Increases <i>on-budget deficits</i> in any of the four consecutive 10-year periods beginning in 2035?	No	Mandate Effects	
		Contains intergovernmental mandate?	No
		Contains private-sector mandate?	No
* = between -\$500,000 and \$500,000.			

H.R. 7683 would require postsecondary education institutions to meet certain requirements to participate in federal student aid programs, including the Federal Pell Grant Program and the federal student loan programs.

Under the bill, public institutions generally would have to:

- Allow students to freely engage in noncommercial expressive activity on campus;
- Provide religious student organizations with any rights otherwise afforded to other student organizations;
- Make admission and employment decisions without soliciting applicants' or employees' personal beliefs regarding any particular social or political issues, including diversity, equity, and inclusion initiatives beyond upholding existing federal law; and
- Publish viewpoint-neutral policies for allocating mandatory student fees among student organizations and for assessing security fees for student-organized events.

If a public institution was found by a court to have violated any of the bill's requirements, the institution would lose eligibility for federal student aid until the Secretary of Education determined that the institution was no longer in violation.

See also

[CBO's Cost Estimates Explained](#), [CBO Describes Its Cost-Estimating Process](#), [Glossary](#)



In addition, public and private institutions could lose eligibility to participate in federal student aid programs if they violated the bill's requirements to allow students to form or join single-sex organizations and disclose annually to students and faculty any institutional policies related to freedom of association, religion, or speech. Institutions could still prohibit student organizations that knowingly provide support or resources to a foreign terrorist organization.

Finally, H.R. 7683 would require the Department of Education to report annually to the Congress summarizing institutional violations and the actions taken by the department to restore institutions' eligibility.

Using information about the cost of similar activities, CBO estimates that it would cost less than \$500,000 over the 2024-2029 period for the Department of Education to publish regulations, monitor violations, and report annually. Any spending would be subject to the availability of appropriated funds.

In addition, institutions that violated the provisions of H.R. 7683 could lose eligibility for federal student aid; those programs are funded both by direct spending and by spending subject to appropriation. Because CBO expects that institutions would generally comply with the bill's requirements, we estimate that enacting the bill would not significantly reduce direct spending or spending subject to appropriation.

CBO's estimate of H.R. 7683 is subject to uncertainty. Enacting the bill would allow individuals and organizations to bring civil suits against public postsecondary educational institutions that fail to meet the bill's requirements. The number of such actions that might be brought, and their ultimate outcome, is uncertain. If more institutions lose eligibility under H.R. 7683 than CBO expects, the reduction in federal spending would be larger than CBO estimates.

The CBO staff contact for this estimate is Margot Berman. The estimate was reviewed by H. Samuel Papenfuss, Deputy Director of Budget Analysis.

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