

115TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to direct the Secretary of Education to award grants for teaching English learners to institutions of higher education.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Ms. CORTEZ MASTO (for herself, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Mr. BENNET, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Ms. HARRIS, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Ms. HIRONO) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to direct the Secretary of Education to award grants for teaching English learners to institutions of higher education.

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 “Reaching English
5 Learners Act”.

1 **SEC. 2. TEACHING ENGLISH LEARNERS GRANT.**

2 Part B of title II of the Higher Education Act of
3 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1031 et seq.) is amended by adding at
4 the end the following:

5 **“Subpart 6—Teaching English Learners**

6 **“SEC. 259. TEACHING ENGLISH LEARNERS GRANT.**

7 “(a) AUTHORIZATION OF PROGRAM.—The Secretary
8 shall award grants, on a competitive basis, to eligible part-
9 nerships to pay the Federal share of the costs of improving
10 the preparation of teacher candidates to ensure that such
11 teacher candidates possess the knowledge and skills nec-
12 essary to effectively instruct English learners.

13 “(b) DURATION OF GRANTS.—A grant awarded
14 under this section shall be for a period of not more than
15 5 years.

16 “(c) NON-FEDERAL SHARE.—An eligible partnership
17 that receives a grant under this section shall provide an
18 amount of not less than 25 percent of the cost of the ac-
19 tivities carried out under the grant from non-Federal
20 sources, which may be provided in cash or in-kind.

21 “(d) USES OF FUNDS.—An eligible partnership that
22 receives a grant under this section shall use the grant to—

23 “(1) develop or strengthen a teacher prepara-
24 tion program by integrating strategies for teaching
25 English learners into the education curriculum and
26 academic content;

1 “(2) provide teacher candidates participating in
2 the teacher preparation program with skills related
3 to—

4 “(A) helping English learners—

5 “(i) achieve at high levels in early
6 childhood education programs, and in ele-
7 mentary schools and secondary schools, so
8 such English learners can meet the chal-
9 lenging State academic standards adopted
10 under section 1111(b)(1) of the Elemen-
11 tary and Secondary Education Act of 1965
12 by the State of the school attended by the
13 English learners, which all children in the
14 State are expected to meet; and

15 “(ii) attain English proficiency;

16 “(B) appropriately identifying and meeting
17 the specific learning needs of children with dis-
18 abilities who are English learners;

19 “(C) recognizing and addressing the social
20 and emotional needs of English learners; and

21 “(D) promoting parental, family, and com-
22 munity engagement in educational programs
23 that serve English learners;

1 “(3) provide work-based learning opportunities
2 for teacher candidates participating in the teacher
3 preparation program; and

4 “(4) provide teacher candidates enrolled in the
5 teacher preparation program with the required
6 coursework to qualify for an English as a second
7 language endorsement or initial teaching credential,
8 as recognized by the State served by the eligible
9 partnership.

10 “(e) APPLICATION.—

11 “(1) IN GENERAL.—An eligible partnership
12 seeking a grant under this section shall submit an
13 application to the Secretary at such time, in such
14 manner, and containing such information as the Sec-
15 retary may require.

16 “(2) CONTENTS.—Such application shall in-
17 clude a self-assessment by the eligible partnership
18 of—

19 “(A) the existing teacher preparation pro-
20 gram at the institution of higher education par-
21 ticipating in the eligible partnership, as of the
22 date of application, and the needs related to
23 preparing teacher candidates to instruct
24 English learners in the manner described in
25 subsection (d)(2); and

1 “(B) the personnel needs for teachers who
2 instruct English learners at local, public early
3 childhood education programs and at elemen-
4 tary schools and secondary schools.

5 “(f) EVALUATIONS.—

6 “(1) REPORTS FROM ELIGIBLE PARTNER-
7 SHIPS.—At the end of the grant period for a grant
8 under this section, an eligible partnership receiving
9 a grant under this section shall submit to the Sec-
10 retary the results of an evaluation conducted by the
11 partnership to determine—

12 “(A) the effectiveness of teachers who com-
13 pleted a program under subsection (d)(1) with
14 respect to the instruction of English learners;
15 and

16 “(B) the systemic impact of the activities
17 carried out by such grant on how such partner-
18 ship prepares teachers to provide instruction in
19 early childhood education programs, and ele-
20 mentary schools and secondary schools.

21 “(2) REPORT FROM THE SECRETARY.—Not
22 later than 180 days after the last day of a grant pe-
23 riod for grants awarded under this section, the Sec-
24 retary shall make available to the authorizing com-
25 mittees and the public—

1 “(A) a summary of the evaluations sub-
2 mitted under paragraph (1) for such grants;
3 and

4 “(B) information on best practices related
5 to effective instruction of English learners.

6 “(g) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

7 “(1) CHILD WITH A DISABILITY.—The term
8 ‘child with a disability’ has the meaning given the
9 term in section 602 of the Individuals with Disabil-
10 ities Education Act.

11 “(2) ELIGIBLE INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDU-
12 CATION.—The term ‘eligible institution of higher
13 education’ means an institution of higher education
14 that has a teacher preparation program.

15 “(3) ELIGIBLE PARTNERSHIP.—The term ‘eligi-
16 ble partnership’ means an eligible institution of
17 higher education in partnership with a high-need
18 local educational agency.

19 “(4) ENGLISH LEARNER.—The term ‘English
20 learner’ has the meaning given the term in section
21 8101 of the Elementary and Secondary Education
22 Act of 1965.

23 “(5) TEACHER PREPARATION PROGRAM.—The
24 term ‘teacher preparation program’ means a pro-
25 gram—

1 “(A) that is offered by an institution of
2 higher education;

3 “(B) that leads to an undergraduate de-
4 gree, a master’s degree, or completion of a
5 postbaccalaureate program required for teacher
6 certification; and

7 “(C) the graduates of which meet the ap-
8 plicable State certification or licensure require-
9 ments, including any requirements for certifi-
10 cation obtained through alternative routes to
11 certification.

12 “(6) WORK-BASED LEARNING.—The term
13 ‘work-based learning’ means learning involving sus-
14 tained interactions with teachers and English learn-
15 ers at public early childhood education programs, or
16 elementary schools or secondary schools, to the ex-
17 tent practicable, or simulated environments at the
18 eligible institution of higher education involved, that
19 foster in-depth, first-hand engagement with tasks re-
20 quired of a teacher providing instruction to English
21 learners.”.

22 **SEC. 3. CONFORMING AMENDMENT.**

23 Section 200(6) of the of the Higher Education Act
24 of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1021(6)) is amended by striking “sec-
25 tion 251” and inserting “sections 251 and 259”.