

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 1686 Session of 2023

INTRODUCED BY O'MARA, HANBIDGE, SANCHEZ, MADDEN, HOHENSTEIN, ISAACSON, SCHLOSSBERG, HARKINS, FLEMING, CIRESI, KIM, D. WILLIAMS, SHUSTERMAN, KINSEY, DELLOSO, ROZZI, HOWARD, T. DAVIS, WARREN, MERSKI, KEEFER, KUTZ AND TAKAC, SEPTEMBER 19, 2023

AS REPORTED FROM COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, AS AMENDED, DECEMBER 12, 2023

AN ACT

1 Requiring disclosure of mandatory fees by institutions of higher  
2 education.

3 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
4 hereby enacts as follows:

5 Section 1. Short title.

6 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Know What You  
7 Pay For - The Student Fee Transparency Act.

8 Section 2. Definitions.

9 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall  
10 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the  
11 context clearly indicates otherwise:

12 "Department." The Department of Education of the  
13 Commonwealth.

14 "Institution of higher education." Any of the following:

15 (1) A community college operating under Article XIX-A of  
16 the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the

1 Public School Code of 1949.

2 (2) A university within the State System of Higher  
3 Education.

4 (3) The Pennsylvania State University.

5 (4) The University of Pittsburgh.

6 (5) Temple University.

7 (6) Lincoln University.

8 (7) The Thaddeus Stevens College of Technology.

9 (8) Any other institution that is designated as "State-  
10 related" by the Commonwealth.

11 (9) An accredited private or independent college or  
12 university.

13 (10) A private licensed school as defined in the act of  
14 December 15, 1986 (P.L.1585, No.174), known as the Private  
15 Licensed Schools Act.

16 (11) A COLLEGE ESTABLISHED UNDER ARTICLE XIX-G OF THE <--  
17 PUBLIC SCHOOL CODE OF 1949.

18 (12) A FOREIGN CORPORATION APPROVED TO OPERATE AN  
19 EDUCATIONAL ENTERPRISE UNDER 22 PA. CODE CH. 36 (RELATING TO  
20 FOREIGN CORPORATION STANDARDS).

21 "Mandatory fee." ~~Any of the following:~~ <--

22 ~~(1) Mandatory enrollment fee.~~

23 ~~(2) Mandatory incidental fee.~~

24 ~~(3) Mandatory student initiated fee.~~

25 ~~(4) Any other fee a student must pay as a condition of~~  
26 ~~attending an institution of higher education that is not~~  
27 ~~directly applied to a student's tuition, room or board fees.~~

28 A CHARGE IMPOSED BY AN INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION TO ALL <--  
29 OF THE INSTITUTION'S STUDENTS, IRRESPECTIVE OF THEIR COURSE  
30 OR ADMISSION STATUS, FOR ENROLLMENT OR ATTENDANCE FOR ITEMS

1 NOT COVERED BY TUITION, ROOM OR BOARD FEES.

2 "Online student portal." A secured internal Internet service  
3 administered by an institution of higher education on which a  
4 student of the institution of higher education can access  
5 personal academic, financial ~~and~~ OR other information related to <--  
6 attending the institution of higher education.

7 Section 3. Requirements.

8 An institution of higher education shall prominently display  
9 a description of every mandatory fee charged by the institution  
10 of higher education and shall publish the fee description on  
11 each institution of higher education's publicly accessible  
12 Internet website and online student portal prior to the term for  
13 which the mandatory fee will be charged and included in any  
14 tuition bill. The amount of the mandatory fee must be  
15 accompanied by a description of:

16 (1) The general purpose of the mandatory fee.

17 (2) How the mandatory fee ~~will~~ IS EXPECTED TO be <--  
18 allocated and used.

19 (3) How the mandatory fee will be collected, the  
20 duration of time for which the fee will be assessed and the  
21 beginning and end dates for collecting the mandatory fee.

22 Section 4. Reporting fees.

23 Beginning November 15, ~~2023~~ 2024, and by November 15 of each <--  
24 year thereafter, ~~each~~ AN institution of higher education shall <--  
25 ~~report to the department on the institution of higher~~ <--  
26 ~~education's collection of mandatory fees during the prior~~  
27 ~~academic year. The report shall include:~~

28 ~~(1) The total amount of mandatory fees collected.~~

29 ~~(2) The amount of mandatory fees allocated to each use~~  
30 ~~or recipient.~~ PUBLISH ON THE INSTITUTION'S PUBLICLY <--

1 ACCESSIBLE INTERNET WEBSITE THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION FROM  
2 THE PRIOR ACADEMIC YEAR:

3 (1) THE TOTAL AMOUNT OF MANDATORY FEES COLLECTED.

4 (2) THE AMOUNT OF MANDATORY FEES ALLOCATED TO EACH USE.

5 Section 5. Reporting to the department.

6 Beginning on June 30, ~~2023~~ 2025, and by June 30 of each year <--  
7 thereafter, ~~each~~ AN institution of higher education shall ~~report~~ <--  
8 ~~to the department the measures taken to display the information~~  
9 ~~required under this act.~~ PROVIDE TO THE DEPARTMENT A LINK TO THE <--  
10 FEE INFORMATION PUBLISHED ON THE INSTITUTION'S PUBLICLY  
11 ACCESSIBLE INTERNET WEBSITE AS REQUIRED UNDER SECTIONS 3 AND 4.

12 Section 6. Effective date.

13 This act shall take effect ~~immediately.~~ JULY 1, 2024, OR <--  
14 IMMEDIATELY, WHICHEVER IS LATER.