

“(1) A substantial amount of fraud occurs in the offering of college education financial assistance services to consumers.

“(2) Such fraud includes the following:

“(A) Misrepresentations regarding the provision of sources from which consumers may obtain financial assistance (including scholarships, grants, loans, tuition, awards, and other assistance) for purposes of financing a college education.

“(B) Misrepresentations regarding the provision of portfolios of such assistance tailored to the needs of specific consumers.

“(C) Misrepresentations regarding the pre-selection of students as eligible to receive such assistance.

“(D) Misrepresentations that such assistance will be provided to consumers who purchase specified services from specified entities.

“(E) Misrepresentations regarding the business relationships between particular entities and entities that award or may award such assistance.

“(F) Misrepresentations regarding refunds of processing fees if consumers are not provided specified amounts of such assistance, and other misrepresentations regarding refunds.

“(3) In 1996, the Federal Trade Commission launched ‘Project Scholarscam’, a joint law enforcement and consumer education campaign directed at fraudulent purveyors of so-called ‘scholarship services’.

“(4) Despite the efforts of the Federal Trade Commission, colleges and universities, and nongovernmental organizations, the continued lack of awareness about scholarship fraud permits a significant amount of fraudulent activity to occur.”

§ 1092e. College access initiative

(a) State-by-State information

The Secretary shall direct each guaranty agency with which the Secretary has an agreement under section 1078(c) of this title to provide to the Secretary the information necessary for the development of Internet web links and access for students and families to a comprehensive listing of the postsecondary education opportunities, programs, publications, Internet web sites, and other services available in the States for which such agency serves as the designated guarantor.

(b) Guaranty agency activities

(1) Plan and activity required

Each guaranty agency with which the Secretary has an agreement under section 1078(c) of this title shall develop a plan, and undertake the activity necessary, to gather the information required under subsection (a) and to make such information available to the public and to the Secretary in a form and manner as prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) Activities

Each guaranty agency shall undertake such activities as are necessary to promote access to postsecondary education for students through providing information on college planning, career preparation, and paying for college. The guaranty agency shall publicize such information and coordinate such activities with other entities that either provide or distribute such information in the States for which such guaranty agency serves as the designated guarantor.

(3) Funding

The activities required by this section may be funded from the guaranty agency’s Oper-

ating Fund established pursuant to section 1072b of this title and, to the extent funds remain, from earnings on the restricted account established pursuant to section 1072(h)(4) of this title.

(4) Rule of construction

Nothing in this subsection shall be construed to require a guaranty agency to duplicate any efforts under way on February 8, 2006, that meet the requirements of this section.

(c) Access to information

(1) Secretary’s responsibility

The Secretary shall ensure the availability of the information provided, by the guaranty agencies in accordance with this section, to students, parents, and other interested individuals, through Internet web links or other methods prescribed by the Secretary.

(2) Guaranty agency responsibility

The guaranty agencies shall ensure that the information required by this section is available without charge in printed format for students and parents requesting such information.

(3) Publicity

Not later than 270 days after February 8, 2006, the Secretary and guaranty agencies shall publicize the availability of the information required by this section, with special emphasis on ensuring that populations that are traditionally underrepresented in postsecondary education are made aware of the availability of such information.

(Pub. L. 89-329, title IV, § 485D, as added Pub. L. 109-171, title VIII, § 8023, Feb. 8, 2006, 120 Stat. 179.)

Statutory Notes and Related Subsidiaries

EFFECTIVE DATE

Section effective July 1, 2006, except as otherwise provided, see section 8001(c) of Pub. L. 109-171, set out as an Effective Date of 2006 Amendment note under section 1002 of this title.

§ 1092f. Early awareness of financial aid eligibility

(a) In general

The Secretary shall implement, in cooperation with States, institutions of higher education, secondary schools, early intervention and outreach programs under this subchapter, other agencies and organizations involved in student financial assistance and college access, public libraries, community centers, employers, and businesses, a comprehensive system of early financial aid information in order to provide students and families with early information about financial aid and early estimates of such students’ eligibility for financial aid from multiple sources. Such system shall include the activities described in subsection (b).

(b) Communication of availability of aid and aid eligibility

(1) Students who receive benefits

The Secretary shall—