

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY MAY 28, 2015

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 13, 2015

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2015–16 REGULAR SESSION

ASSEMBLY BILL

No. 721

Introduced by Assembly Member Medina

February 25, 2015

An act to amend Sections 69800 and 69800.5 of, and to add Section 69800.2 to, the Education Code, relating to student financial aid.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 721, as amended, Medina. Student financial aid: private student loans.

Existing law requires a public, private, or independent postsecondary educational institution, except the California Community Colleges, to make specified disclosures related to private student loans in financial aid material and private loan applications provided or made available by the institution, to distinguish private loans from federal loans in individual financial aid awards, and, if the institution provides a private loan lender list, to provide general information about the loans available through the lender and disclose the basis for each lender's inclusion on the list.

This bill would require the public, private, or independent institution to make available to the public upon request and in a prominent location on its Internet Web site specified student loan debt statistics on graduates, to provide students information concerning unused federal student loan moneys available to them before certifying their eligibility for private student loans, and, if the institution does not participate in federal student loan programs, to inform students that they may be

eligible for federal student loans at participating institutions and provide them information regarding Cal Grants and federal student aid. The bill would make nonsubstantive and conforming changes.

Vote: majority. Appropriation: no. Fiscal committee: yes. State-mandated local program: no.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

1 SECTION 1. Section 69800 of the Education Code is amended
2 to read:

3 69800. A public, private, or independent postsecondary
4 educational institution, except the California Community Colleges,
5 shall do all of the following:

6 (a) (1) State both of the following in all printed and online
7 financial aid materials issued or distributed by the institution to
8 applicants for admission or matriculated students and with private
9 loan applications provided or made available by the institution:

10 (A) Federal student loans are required by law to provide a range
11 of flexible repayment options, including, but not limited to,
12 income-based repayment and income-contingent repayment plans,
13 and loan forgiveness benefits, which other student loans are not
14 required to provide.

15 (B) Federal direct loans are available to students regardless of
16 income.

17 (2) The institution may continue to use financial aid materials
18 that are printed before January 1, 2013, if the institution includes
19 an insert with the printed material that provides the information
20 required in paragraph (1). All financial aid materials printed on or
21 after January 1, 2013, shall include the information required in
22 paragraph (1).

23 (b) Clearly distinguish private loans from federal loans in
24 individual financial aid awards by stating, for any private loans
25 included by the institution as part of the institution’s award
26 package, all of the following:

27 (1) Whether the rate is fixed or variable.

28 (2) An explanation that private student loan lenders can offer
29 variable interest rates that can increase or decrease over time,
30 depending on market conditions.

31 (3) An explanation that private student loans have a range of
32 interest rates and fees and students should determine the interest

1 rate of, and any fees associated with, the private student loan
2 included in their financial aid award package before accepting the
3 loan.

4 (4) An explanation that students should contact the lender of
5 the private student loan or their postsecondary educational
6 institution's financial aid office if they have any questions about
7 a private student loan.

8 (5) An explanation that the interest rate on a private loan may
9 depend on the borrower's credit rating.

10 (c) If the institution provides a private loan lender list, it also
11 shall provide general information about the loans available through
12 the lender and disclose the basis for each lender's inclusion on the
13 list. The institution shall also disclose with the list that the student
14 has the ability to choose any lender.

15 (d) (1) Make available to the public upon request and in a
16 prominent location on its Internet Web site the following
17 information concerning graduates and student loan debt:

18 (A) The number of students who started as first-time
19 postsecondary students at the institution and received a certificate,
20 associate's degree, or bachelor's degree during that academic year.

21 (B) (i) The number and percentage of the students identified
22 pursuant to subparagraph (A) who borrowed at any time while
23 enrolled at the institution through any student loan program,
24 including, but not necessarily limited to, institutional loans, state
25 loans, federal Perkins loans, federal Stafford subsidized and
26 unsubsidized loans, and private loans that were certified by the
27 institution, including both federal direct student loans and federal
28 family education loans.

29 (ii) The total principal borrowed in those loans described in
30 clause (i).

31 (C) (i) The number and percentage of the students identified
32 pursuant to subparagraph (A) who borrowed at any time while
33 enrolled at the institution through a federal student loan program,
34 including, but not necessarily limited to, federal Perkins loans,
35 federal Stafford subsidized and unsubsidized loans, federal direct
36 student loans, and federal family education loans, but excluding
37 institutional loans, state loans, and private loans.

38 (ii) The total principal borrowed in those loans described in
39 clause (i).

1 (D) The average cumulative principal borrowed by those
2 students counted for purposes of the calculations required by
3 subparagraphs (B) and (C), calculated by dividing the sum
4 identified in clause (ii) of each of those subparagraphs by the
5 number of students receiving the loans described in the respective
6 subparagraph. The institution shall report average loan debt
7 information for certificate, associate degree, and bachelor degree
8 programs separately.

9 (2) For purposes of this subdivision, “loans” shall include
10 cosigned loans that financed a student’s own enrollment or
11 attendance, but shall not include parental loans.

12 SEC. 2. Section 69800.2 is added to the Education Code, to
13 read:

14 69800.2. (a) Before certifying a borrower’s eligibility for a
15 private student loan, a public, private, or independent
16 postsecondary educational institution shall ~~comply with Section~~
17 ~~69800,~~ and provide to the student information concerning all
18 unused federal student loan moneys available to that student.

19 (b) An institution that does not participate in federal student
20 loan programs shall, before processing a private loan, inform the
21 student that the institution does not participate in federal loan
22 programs and that the student may be eligible for federal loans at
23 a participating institution. The institution shall provide the student
24 with information regarding the Cal Grants Web link on the
25 California Student Aid Commission’s Web site and the Federal
26 Student Aid Web link on the United States Department of
27 Education’s Web site.

28 SEC. 3. Section 69800.5 of the Education Code is amended to
29 read:

30 69800.5. ~~Except as provided in Section 69800.2, the~~ *The*
31 California Community Colleges may, and are requested to, comply
32 with the provisions of Section 69800.