§ 1092d. Scholarship fraud assessment and awareness activities

(a) Annual report on scholarship fraud

(1) Requirement

The Attorney General and the Secretary of Education, in conjunction with the Federal Trade Commission, shall jointly submit to Congress each year a report on fraud in the offering of financial assistance for purposes of financing an education at an institution of higher education. Each report shall contain an assessment of the nature and quantity of incidents of such fraud during the one-year period ending on the date of such report.

(2) Initial report

The first report under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later than 18 months after November 1, 2000.

(b) National awareness activities

The Secretary of Education shall, in conjunction with the Federal Trade Commission, maintain a scholarship fraud awareness site on the Internet web site of the Department of Education. The scholarship fraud awareness site may include the following:

(1) Appropriate materials from the Project Scholarscam awareness campaign of the Commission, including examples of common fraudulent schemes.

(2) A list of companies and individuals who have been convicted of scholarship fraud in Federal or State court.

(3) An Internet-based message board to provide a forum for public complaints and experiences with scholarship fraud.

(4) An electronic comment form for individuals who have experienced scholarship fraud or have questions about scholarship fraud, with appropriate mechanisms for the transfer of comments received through such forms to the Department and the Commission.

(5) Internet links to other sources of information on scholarship fraud, including Internet web sites of appropriate nongovernmental organizations, colleges and universities, and government agencies.

(6) An Internet link to the Better Business Bureau in order to assist individuals in assessing the business practices of other persons and entities.

(7) Information on means of communicating with the Federal Student Aid Information Center, including telephone and Internet contact information.


Codification

Section was enacted as part of the College Scholarship Fraud Prevention Act of 2000, and not as part of title IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965 which comprises this subchapter.

Findings

Pub. L. 106–420, § 2, Nov. 1, 2000, 114 Stat. 1867, provided that: “Congress makes the following findings:

“(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.”