H. R. _____

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to simplify the FAFSA requirements for dependent students, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. Scott of Virginia introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on __________________________

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to simplify the FAFSA requirements for dependent students, and for other purposes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “File Once FAFSA Act of 2016”.

SEC. 2. FAFSA SIMPLIFICATION.

(a) ONE-TIME FAFSA FILING FOR DEPENDENT

STUDENTS.—Section 483(a) of the Higher Education Act
of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1090(a)) is amended by adding at the end the following:

“(13) ONE-TIME FAFSA FILING FOR DEPENDENT STUDENTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of this section and subject to subparagraphs (B) and (C), an applicant who submits a FAFSA for the first time during the period required for the completion of the first undergraduate baccalaureate course of study being pursued by such applicant and is determined to be a dependent student who is eligible to receive a Federal Pell Grant for the academic year for which the applicant submitted such FAFSA—

“(i) for any succeeding academic year for which the applicant does not submit a FAFSA and for which the applicant submits a certification form described in subparagraph (D) based on which the Secretary confirms that the applicant is a dependent student for such year—

“(I) shall not be required to submit a FAFSA to receive financial assistance under this title; and
“(II) shall have an expected family contribution for such year that is equal to the expected family contribution of the applicant determined for the academic year for which the applicant submitted a FAFSA during such period, except that an adjustment to such expected family contribution may be made under section 479A;

“(ii) if the applicant submits a FAFSA for any succeeding academic year—

“(I) shall have an expected family contribution for such year that is determined based on such FAFSA; and

“(II) shall be required to submit a FAFSA for any other academic year for which the applicant seeks financial assistance under this title; and

“(iii) if the applicant is determined to be an independent student for any succeeding academic year or does not submit a certification form described in subparagraph (D), shall submit a FAFSA for such
succeeding academic year and any other
academic year for which the applicant
seeks financial assistance under this title.

“(B) ADJUSTMENT OF EXPECTED FAMILY
CONTRIBUTION.—With respect to an applicant
described in subparagraph (A)(i) who receives
an adjustment under section 479A to the ex-
pected family contribution of the applicant for
an academic year, for any succeeding academic
year after the academic year for which the ad-
justment was made, subclause (II) of such sub-
paragraph shall be applied to such applicant by
substituting ‘expected family contribution of the
applicant as most recently adjusted under sec-
tion 479A for such applicant’ for the ‘expected
family contribution of the applicant determined
for the academic year for which the applicant
submitted a FAFSA during such period’.

“(C) RULE FOR CERTAIN STUDENTS.—
With respect to an applicant who submits a
FAFSA for academic year 2016-2017 and en-
rolls in an institution of higher education for
such year, subparagraph (A) shall be applied—
“(i) in the matter preceding clause (i), by substituting ‘academic year 2016–2017’ for ‘the first time’; and

“(ii) in clause (i)(II), by substituting ‘academic year 2016–2017’ for ‘the academic year for which the applicant submitted a FAFSA during such period’.

“(D) DEPENDENT STUDENT CERTIFICATION FORM.—The Secretary, in cooperation with representatives of agencies and organizations involved in student financial assistance, shall use behavioral science insights to produce, distribute, and process free of charge a short and simple consumer-tested dependent student certification form that uses skip logic to bypass fields that are inapplicable to an applicant. Such form shall not require an applicant to provide data that the Secretary may otherwise obtain with respect to the applicant (such as age or active duty military status), and may only contain the data elements required for purposes of subparagraph (A)(i)—

“(i) to confirm that the applicant is a dependent student;
“(ii) to allow the applicant to update
the contact information of such applicant
or the Federal School Code of the institu-
tion of higher education in which the appli-
cant is, or will be enrolled, for the aca-
demic year for which the applicant submits
such form; and

“(iii) to ask whether the applicant’s
need and eligibility for financial assistance
under this title has not changed substan-
tially since the most recent of the fol-
lowing:

“(I) The applicant submitted a
FAFSA.

“(II) The applicant received an
adjustment under section 479A to the
expected family contribution of the
applicant.

“(E) SUCCEEDING ACADEMIC YEAR DE-
FINED.—In this paragraph, the term ‘suc-
ceeding academic year’—

“(i) when used with respect to an ap-
plicant who submits a FAFSA for the first
time for an academic year during the pe-
riod required for the completion of the first
undergraduate baccalaureate course of
study being pursued by such applicant,
means any academic year during such pe-
period that follows the academic year for
which the applicant submits such FAFSA;
and
“(ii) when used with respect to an ap-
plicant described in subparagraph (C),
means any academic year after academic
year 2016–2017 during the period required
for the completion of the first under-
graduate baccalaureate course of study
being pursued by such applicant.”.

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
this section shall be effective with respect to determining
the expected family contribution of applicants for award
year 2017–2018 and each succeeding award year.