



# Senate Education Committee

**Senator Lloyd Smucker**  
Chairman

**Kelly Phenicie**  
*Executive Director/Counsel*  
kphenicie@pasen.gov

**Tabitha Hummer**  
*Deputy Executive Director*  
thummer@pasen.gov

**Diane M. McNaughton**  
*Communications Specialist*  
dmmcnaughton@pasen.gov

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Room 351, Main Capitol Building • Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120-3013 • 717-787-6535

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## HOUSE BILL 2338-REPRESENTATIVE GABLER

### SYNOPSIS:

Establishes protections for students attending Pennsylvania postsecondary education institutions that are accredited by a national accrediting agency that loses Federal recognition.

### SUMMARY:

Creates the Student Protection Act which provides that if the U.S. Department of Education discontinues its recognition of a national accrediting agency, the Commonwealth shall ensure certain protections for students attending an institution in Pennsylvania currently accredited by the national accrediting agency that loses Federal recognition.

The student will remain eligible for State financial assistance through the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency (PHEAA) and any other state agency through which such student may be eligible for assistance, provided that the student meets all other qualifications. Permits PHEAA when advancing financial assistance, to follow the Federal Department of Education's issuance of federal assistance along with any other terms and conditions applied during the transition.

The student will remain eligible for state licensure, certification or any other professional credential for which the student has trained, provided that the student meets all other qualifications and passes any required assessments or exams.

Requires that postsecondary institutions accredited by a national accrediting agency that loses Federal recognition to be provided with a transition period of no less than 18 months to receive new accreditation by another accrediting agency recognized by the Federal Department of Education. The student protections provided will remain throughout this transition period.

Permits the student protections to be continued beyond the 18 months if the postsecondary institution has not received new accreditation if PHEAA deems the extension of the protections to be in the best interest of the students attending the institution.

Requires the institution, during the transition period to new accreditation, to disclose the status of the institution's application for new accreditation to any students who receive state aid from PHEAA.

Requires PHEAA to publish guidelines on the internet for the implementation of this act.

This act shall expire December 31, 2018.

Effective Date: Immediately.

**BILL HISTORY:**

Passed House 10/17/16

Prepared by: Phenicie 10/14/2016