

MAKE COLLEGE TEXTBOOKS MORE AFFORDABLE

Textbook costs are one of the most overlooked costs of going to college, but they can be substantial and create an unnecessary barrier to attaining a college education. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics Consumer Price Index, textbook prices increased by nearly 90 percent between 2006 and 2016. The College Board estimates that the average student at a four-year public institution of higher education spent \$1,240 on college books and supplies during the 2017-18 academic year. A survey by U.S. PIRG found that 65 percent of students decided not to buy a textbook because of the cost and 94 percent of those students worried it would negatively affect their grade.

Durbin-King-Smith-Sinema AFFORDABLE COLLEGE TEXTBOOK ACT (S. 1036)

The Affordable College Textbook Act seeks to influence the textbook market by expanding the use of free, open access textbooks on college campuses providing cheaper alternatives to expensive traditional textbooks while maintaining or improving instruction and student learning outcomes.

Open textbooks are educational resources that are licensed under an open license and made available free of charge to the public. This allows professors, students, researchers, and others to freely access these materials as a supplement or alternative to traditional textbooks. *Specifically the bill:*

- Authorizes a grant program, similar to the Open Textbooks Pilot program for which Congress appropriated \$10 million over the last two fiscal years, to support projects at colleges and universities to create and expand the use of open textbooks with priority for those programs that will achieve the highest savings for students
- Ensures that any open textbooks or educational materials created using program funds will be freely and easily accessible to the public
- Requires entities who receive funds to complete a report on the effectiveness of the program in achieving savings for students
- Improves and updates existing requirements for publishers and institutions that provides information on textbook costs for required materials to students on course schedules
- Requires the Government Accountability Office to report to Congress with an update on the price trends of college textbooks

SUPPORTERS. U.S. PIRG, Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition, National Association of College Stores, Association of Big Ten Students, Young Invincibles, American Federation of Teachers, National Education Association, Service Employees International Union, American Association of Community Colleges, Association of Community College Trustees, UNCF, Creative Commons, Association of Research Libraries, Association of College & Research Libraries, CAST