Legislative Alert – The Correctly Recognizing Educational Achievements to Empower (CREATE) Graduates Act

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Senators Tom Harkin (D-IA) and Kay Hagan (D-NC) have introduced a bill to enable the awarding of associate's degrees to students who transfer from community college programs to four-year colleges and universities without attaining a bachelor's degree. The CREATE Graduates Act would create state incentives to encourage four-year institutions to adopt "reverse-transfer" programs to enable transfer students from two-year institutions to obtain the associate's degrees they would have earned had they remained at the two-year institutions and completed the required credits. The goal of the bill is to allow eligible students to obtain an associate's degree despite having to leave a four-year program prior to graduation in order to take a job, care for a family member, or because they can no longer afford the cost of college, for example. The legislation would build on the success of a grant-funded pilot program currently underway at schools in 15 states, which is expected to enable thousands of students to obtain associate's degrees.

Client Tip: *Institutions should monitor the outcome of this bill, and, if passed in its current form, consider reviewing the incentives offered for adopting a "reverse-transfer" program for transfer students who leave the institution before obtaining a four-year degree.*

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