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# CONGRESS

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## Stabenow, Brown, Franken Gillibrand: Legislation Will Help Youth Who Have Dropped Out of High School Earn Their Diploma

### *Introduce "RAISE UP" Act*

Washington, D.C.—U.S. Senators Debbie Stabenow (D-MI) Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Al Franken (D-MN), and Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY) today introduced the Reengaging Americans in Serious Education by Uniting Programs Act (RAISE UP). The legislation provides targeted support to youth who have dropped out of high school, so they can attain a diploma, a post-secondary credential, and a family-supporting career.

“When young people drop out of high school, they are too often cast aside without the support network necessary to help them get back on the right track,” said Senator Stabenow. “That’s why I am pleased this legislation will connect disadvantaged youth with strong community coalitions, so they can earn a diploma and attain the skills to compete in the 21<sup>st</sup> century workforce.”

“A high school diploma can be a gateway to success,” said Senator Brown. “Students who drop out of high school need to know that it’s never too late to get a diploma or skills training and get back on track. This bill would help support our next generation with the tools they need to succeed.”

“I’m a firm believer in return on investment, and that’s exactly what the RAISE UP Act offers us,” said Senator Franken. “It will provide Minnesota’s communities with the resources they need to prevent at-risk youth from falling through the cracks. Investing now means that later they can become productive members of our society and compete in a 21st century workforce.”

“Without a high school diploma, thousands of young New Yorkers are denied access to economic opportunity,” said Senator Gillibrand. “In New York, there are 324,000 young people between the ages of 18 and 24 who don’t have a high school diploma. We all have a responsibility to ensure there are better, brighter opportunities for our youth. If we are successful, we will create communities in which all young people can realize their God-given potential.”

Every day, 7,000 students drop out of school across the country. For every 10 students who start freshman year, only seven will graduate. In the nation’s 50 largest cities, they make \$10,000 less per year than high school graduates, and \$34,000 less than college graduates. Furthermore, only

37 percent of youth who drop out of high school nationwide are steadily employed, and they are more than twice as likely to live in poverty.

The RAISE UP Act strives to maximize current support programs by uniting education, workforce, and youth support services to help students overcome obstacles and succeed once they are back in the classroom. These community partnerships would receive federal funds to integrate existing into an intentional dropout recovery system at the local level. The RAISE UP Act united existing education, workforce, and youth support services and creates individual student plans to help young people overcome obstacles and support them from classroom to career. These services for students include:

- **Education**

This program provides funding for education services that meet or exceed state and district academic standards. In addition to regular classroom hours, students can get tutoring, mentoring, school-to-career transition assistance and other services as they work to complete high school.

- **Workforce Preparation**

Career-focused training and technical education will prepare students for successful careers. These 21st century skills will help young people obtain good-paying jobs in high growth sectors such as healthcare, information technology, and green-collar jobs.

- **Youth Support Services**

Students will receive access to support services such as child care, transportation, public housing assistance, case management, mental health services, drug treatment, and English as a Second Language classes.

Eligible Participants: This legislation would serve young adults in disadvantaged situations that left secondary school without receiving a high school diploma. This also includes runaway and homeless youth, youth in foster care and those aging out of care, and young people with disabilities.

Priority: This legislation gives priority to communities with disproportionately high numbers of young people who have left school without obtaining a diploma, communities with high concentrations of young people from low-income families, as well as communities with high rates of unemployment among young people.

Authorization: This bill is authorized at \$1 billion.