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Student Protection Against Sudden College Closures

Last month, Florida, New York and Illinois Representatives introduced a bill aimed at protecting students from sudden closures of higher education institutions. The *Stop College Closures Act of 2019* ([H.R. 4615](#)) requires that accrediting agencies work proactively to review an institution's teach-out plan when the agency is triggered by potential college closure practices or behaviors, instead of reacting to colleges that close suddenly. Tracking and immediately responding to triggers such as accreditation and licensing problems, the decline of accreditation standards and financial responsibility scores, and closely monitoring and assessing an institution's record of complaints in a timely manner are at the core of the *Stop College Closures Act of 2019*. H.R. 4615 is intended to be part of the bill to reauthorize the Higher Education Act as it not only reinforces, but it also makes more explicit how accreditors carry out current practices. The bill has been referred to the House Committee on Education and Labor. For more information visit [New Bill on College Closure Protection](#).

Higher Education Mergers: A New Perspective for a New Direction

In higher education, there is an understandable stigma of mergers and acquisitions. However, the emerging higher education climate suggests that a well-thought-out merger process can help institutional and higher education administrators understand where a college stands and where it must go in order to preserve its new, combined mission and the value it provides to the local community. The strategic study of institutional mergers and consolidations can be the platform for informed decisions on the future and well-being of an institution. Further, institutions can benefit greatly from considering the strengths and weaknesses of each institution on its own and the synergy that could be created through merging. There are so many aspects to consider: financial standing, staffing, data, technology systems, accreditation, programmatic offerings and more. If strategically assessing the options for mergers becomes practice before circumstances become dire, more institutions of all types and sizes could benefit from considering whether merging or consolidating offers the new direction that institutions desire. For more information visit [The Growing Role of Mergers in Higher Ed](#).

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