



PRESS RELEASE

Attorney General Frosh to Education Secretary DeVos: Reject Accrediting Agency that Approved Failing For-Profit Schools

BALTIMORE, MD (February 20, 2018) – Maryland Attorney General Brian E. Frosh today joined a coalition of states in opposing an application by the Accrediting Council for Independent Colleges and Schools (ACICS) to regain its status as a nationally-recognized accreditor, noting the accreditor’s “extreme and far-reaching oversight failures” and the serious harm it caused students and taxpayers across the country by enabling fraud and abuse by predatory for-profit schools.

In response to the U.S. Department of Education’s call for written comments, Attorney General Frosh joined a coalition of 20 attorneys general in calling for the Department to reject ACICS’ application for initial recognition. In the [comments](#), the attorneys general note that the Department terminated ACICS’ recognition just over a year ago due to its pervasive oversight failures, so any attempt by ACICS to become nationally recognized once again “should be treated with great skepticism.” Under the Department’s regulations, the attorneys general assert, ACICS cannot meet the threshold eligibility requirements for receiving national recognition.

“Maryland students were duped into attending schools that offered degrees that had little-to-no real value,” said Attorney General Frosh. “As a result, those students incurred thousands of dollars in debt and received nothing in return. Accreditors like ACICS have a responsibility to protect students. When they fail to do their job, that responsibility should be taken away.”

According to the comments, ACICS’ oversight failures include its decision to extend accreditation to the now-defunct Corinthian Colleges. ACICS continued accrediting Corinthian even after upwards of 20 state and federal agencies initiated investigations into Corinthian’s fraud, and up until the day Corinthian declared bankruptcy.

“ACICS’ previous stint as a nationally recognized accreditor provides a stark illustration of the damage done to both students and taxpayers when accreditors fail to fulfill their oversight responsibilities. During these years, ACICS willingly accredited predatory schools that left students across the country mired in debt and without the quality education they were promised,” the comments state.

In addition to Maryland, attorneys general from California, Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Delaware, Hawaii, Illinois, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, and Washington joined today’s comments.