

## Grassley Pursues Answers After American Bar Association's "Inadequate" Response

Written by Grassley Press

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WASHINGTON – Continuing his work to help make sure law students who take out taxpayer-backed student loans are in a position to pay back the loans, Sen. Chuck Grassley is continuing to ask the American Bar Association (ABA) about the quality of its accreditation of the nation's law schools.

"The organization's inadequate response to my letter raised additional questions that merit drilling down further," Grassley said. "For example, the taxpayers are on the hook for any defaulted student loans. The American Bar Association seems confident that students will be able to pay back their loans, yet also acknowledges uncertain job prospects for lawyers. It's important to examine this further and try to reconcile these statements."

Grassley wrote to the ABA on July 11, citing a news report that the organization was out of compliance with 17 regulations that the federal Department of Education requires accreditation agencies to meet. An advisory committee found issues of [noncompliance](#) including failing to consider student-loan default rates in assessing programs; having no set policy for handling student complaints; and not having a standard for job placement by its member institutions. The ABA responded on July 20. Finding the response inadequate, Grassley sent a second letter this week.

The federal government estimates that it will make 24.3 million loans totaling \$116.4 billion to students and their parents for higher education, including graduate studies, this year alone. The outlook for legal careers is uncertain, raising concerns about whether law school loan default rates will increase.

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"Law school accreditation is like a Good Housekeeping Seal of Approval," Grassley said. "The accreditation implies that the accrediting agency did its homework on behalf of the students who will indebt themselves to attend and on behalf of the taxpayers who made their loans possible. As Ranking Member of the Senate Judiciary Committee, and as an advocate for taxpayers, I'm asking the American Bar Association to account for its work."

The ABA's response is available [here](#) and [here](#) . Grassley's latest letter is available [here](#) .

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