

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to the law as it existed prior to this session of the General Assembly.

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State of Arkansas
83rd General Assembly
Regular Session, 2001

A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1937

By: Representatives Cook, C. Johnson, Broadway, Ledbetter, W. Walker
By: Senators D. Malone, Mahony, Argue, Brown, Riggs

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS GOVERNOR' S SCHOLARS PROGRAM; TO CHANGE THE ELI GI BI LI TY REQUI REMENTS; TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF APPLI CANTS; TO LOWER THE AMOUNT OF THE AWARD; TO DECLARE AN EMERGENCY; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS GOVERNOR' S SCHOLARS PROGRAM; TO CHANGE THE ELI GI BI LI TY REQUI REMENTS; TO REDUCE THE NUMBER OF APPLI CANTS; AND TO LOWER THE AMOUNT OF THE AWARD.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code 6-82-301 is amended to read as follows:
6-82-301. Legi sl ative determi nations.

The General Assembly recognizes that outstanding students are an essential ingredient for the economic and social benefit of the State of Arkansas. Benefits accrue to the state when a majority of National Merit Scholars, National Achievement Scholars, and superior students attend Arkansas institutions of higher learning and remain in the state.

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code 6-82-302 is amended to read as follows:
6-82-302. Defi ni ti ons.

1 As used in this subchapter, unless the context otherwise requires:

2 (1) "Approved institution" means a public or private college or
3 university:

4 (A) Dedicated to educational purposes, located in
5 Arkansas, or located out of state and educating Arkansas residents in
6 dentistry, optometry, veterinary medicine, podiatry, chiropractic, or
7 osteopathy under agreement with the Board of Control for Southern Regional
8 Education, accredited by an accrediting agency certified and recognized by
9 the United States Department of Education or the Division of Agency
10 Evaluation and Institutional Accreditation, or a school giving satisfactory
11 assurance that it has the potential for accreditation and is making progress
12 which, if continued, will result in its achieving accreditation;

13 (B) Which does not discriminate in the admission of
14 students on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; and

15 (C) Which subscribes to the principle of academic freedom;

16 (2) "Department" means the Department of Higher Education;

17 (3) "Full-time student" means a resident of Arkansas who is in
18 attendance at an approved private or public institution and who is enrolled
19 in at least twelve (12) ~~semester hours~~ credit hours the first semester and
20 fifteen (15) hours thereafter; or other reasonable academic equivalent as
21 defined by the department;

22 (4) "Undergraduate student" means an individual who is enrolled
23 in a postsecondary educational program which leads to or is directly
24 creditable toward the individual's first baccalaureate degree;

25 (5) "Eligible student" means a resident of the State of Arkansas
26 as defined by the Department of Higher Education who is eligible for
27 admission as a full-time student and who declares an intent to matriculate in
28 an approved institution in Arkansas;

29 (6) "Scholarship" means an award to an eligible student for
30 matriculation in an approved institution in the State of Arkansas;

31 (7) "Competitive examination" means a standardized examination
32 measuring achievement which is administered annually on a specified date and
33 at a specified location and which is announced publicly;

34 (8) "Academic ability" means the intellectual standing of a
35 student. In determining superior academic ability, the department shall
36 examine the student's high school records, competitive examination scores,

1 and demonstrated leadership capabilities; and

2 (9) "Extraordinary academic ability" means a score of 32 or
3 above on the American College Test (ACT), 1410 or above on the Scholastic
4 Aptitude Test (SAT), ~~or~~ selection as a finalist in either the National Merit
5 Scholarship competition or the National Achievement Scholarship competition
6 conducted by the National Merit Scholarship Corporation.

7
8 SECTION 3. Arkansas Code 6-82-304 is amended to read as follows:

9 6-82-304. Administration - Authority of department.

10 The Department of Higher Education shall administer the Arkansas
11 Governor's Scholars Program and shall have the following authority and
12 responsibility with respect to the program:

13 (1) To prepare application forms or such other forms as the
14 department shall deem necessary to properly administer and carry out the
15 purposes of this subchapter;

16 (2) To establish and consult as necessary with an advisory
17 committee representing the public and private sectors of postsecondary
18 education and secondary schools in determining guidelines and regulations for
19 the administration of this program;

20 (3) To select recipients of scholarships awarded pursuant to the
21 provisions of this subchapter;

22 (4) To establish the procedures for payment of scholarships to
23 recipients; ~~and~~

24 (5) To set a termination date for the acceptance of
25 applications;

26 (6) To review and evaluate the operation of the program with
27 regard to eligibility criteria and size of the scholarship award to ensure
28 that the program's operation meets the intent of this legislation; and

29 (7) To determine the necessary procedures for the awarding of
30 scholarships should the number of eligible applicants exceed the funds
31 available.

32
33 SECTION 4. Arkansas Code 6-82-305 is amended to read as follows:

34 6-82-305. Recipients known as Arkansas Governor's Scholars or Arkansas
35 Governor's Distinguished Scholars.

36 (a) Students receiving scholarships shall be known as Arkansas

1 Governor's Scholars.

2 (b) Arkansas Governor's Scholarship recipients ~~Students~~ who exhibit
3 extraordinary academic ability shall be known as Arkansas Governor's
4 Distinguished Scholars.

5

6 SECTION 5. Arkansas Code 6-82-306 is amended to read as follows:

7 6-82-306. Eligibility.

8 (a) The Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program scholarships are to be
9 awarded to those students who demonstrate the highest capabilities for
10 successful college study.

11 (b) A student is eligible for this scholarship if:

12 (1) The individual has met the admission requirements and is
13 accepted for enrollment as a full-time undergraduate student in an eligible
14 public or private college or university in Arkansas;

15 (2) The individual is a bona fide resident of the state, as
16 defined by the department. Preference will be given to students who plan to
17 enter college at the beginning of the academic year directly following their
18 last year of high school attendance;

19 (3) The individual is a citizen of the United States or a
20 permanent resident alien; ~~and~~

21 (4)(A) The applicant has demonstrated proficiency in the
22 application of knowledge and skills in reading and writing literacy and
23 mathematics by passing the end of course examination as may be developed by
24 the Department of Education, and as may be designated by the Department of
25 Higher Education for this purpose;

26 (B) "End of course" examination shall mean those
27 examinations defined in § 6-15-419(4).

28 ~~(4)(5)(A)~~ (A) The individual satisfactorily meets the qualifications
29 of superior academic ability as established by the department with such
30 criteria consisting of value points for academic achievement and leadership
31 including but not limited to:

32 (i) ACT or SAT score or National Merit Finalist or
33 National Achievement Finalist;

34 (ii) High school grade point average;

35 (iii) Rank in high school class; and

36 (iv) Leadership in school, community, and

1 employment;

2 (B) The Department of Higher Education shall have the
3 authority to alter the weight assigned to the individual criterion to more
4 appropriately meet the needs of the state as determined by the Arkansas
5 Higher Education Coordinating Board.

6 (c) The scholarship shall be weighed on the factors of achievement,
7 ability, and demonstrated leadership capabilities.

8 (d) Students who are selected as Arkansas Governor's Scholars who also
9 exhibit extraordinary academic ability as defined in this subchapter shall be
10 designated as Arkansas Governor's Distinguished Scholars.

11

12 SECTION 6. Arkansas Code 6-82-308 is amended to read as follows:

13 6-82-308. Number and geographic distribution of scholarships.

14 (1) The If sufficient funds are available, effective for students
15 receiving their initial awards beginning in fall, 2001, the number of initial
16 scholarship awards to eligible high achievers shall not exceed ~~three~~ one
17 hundred twenty-five ~~(300)~~(125) each year, to be distributed as follows:

18 (A) One hundred (100) Governor's Distinguished Scholarships
19 capped at ten thousand dollars (\$10,000) per year; and

20 (B) Twenty five (25) Governor's Scholarships at four thousand
21 dollars (\$4,000) per year. However, ~~one (1) such award shall be made to a~~
22 ~~student in each of the seventy five (75) counties, and the remainder shall be~~
23 ~~made to students from the state at large.~~

24 (2) The Department of Higher Education is authorized to adjust this
25 distribution to insure one (1) award in each of the seventy-five (75)
26 counties.

27

28 SECTION 7. Arkansas Code 6-82-311 is amended to read as follows:

29 6-82-311. Term, renewal, and allocation of scholarships.

30 (a) A scholarship may be awarded annually for a period not to exceed
31 an academic year.

32 (b)(1) The scholarships shall correspond to academic terms, semesters,
33 quarters, or equivalent time periods at the eligible institutions.

34 (2) In no instance may the entire amount of the grant for an
35 educational year be paid to or on behalf of students in advance.

36 ~~(c)~~ (1) The Provided sufficient funds are available, the scholarship

1 shall be awarded for one (1) academic year and renewed annually for three (3)
2 additional academic years if the following conditions for renewal are met:

3 (1) The student maintains not less than a 3.0 grade point
4 average on a 4.0 scholastic grading scale and meets other criteria as
5 established by the Department of Higher Education.;

6 (2) However, effective after July 1, 1999, a A student receiving
7 the additional scholarship under § 6-82-312(b) must maintain maintains not
8 less than a 3.25 grade point average on a 4.0 scholastic grading scale.;

9 (3) The recipient has completed a total of at least twenty-seven
10 (27) hours during the first full academic year and, if applicable, a total of
11 at least thirty (30) hours per academic year thereafter;

12 (4) If the student is entering the junior year, the student has
13 taken the standardized rising junior test provided for in § 6-61-114; and

14 (5) The recipient has met any other continuing eligibility
15 criteria established by the Department of Higher Education.

16
17 SECTION 8. Arkansas Code 6-82-312 is amended to read as follows:

18 6-82-312. Scholarship amounts.

19 (a) Scholarships awarded to new recipients who enroll in college as
20 first-time entering freshmen after July 1, 1995, shall be in the amount of
21 four thousand dollars (\$4,000) per year, provided funds are available.

22 (b) ~~Students~~ Provided sufficient funds are available, students who are
23 were first-time entering freshmen after July 1, 1997 but before July 1, 2001,
24 and who exhibit exhibited extraordinary academic achievement shall be
25 awarded, in addition to the award in subsection (a) of this section, an
26 amount per year which when combined with the award in subsection (a) of this
27 section equals tuition, room and board, required textbooks, and mandatory
28 fees charged for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution
29 in which the recipient is enrolled.

30 (c) Provided sufficient funds are available, students who are first-
31 time entering freshmen after July 1, 2001, and who exhibit extraordinary
32 academic achievement shall be awarded, in addition to the award in subsection
33 (a) of this section, an amount per year which, when combined with the award
34 in subsection (a) of this section, equals the lesser of:

35 (1) Ten thousand dollars (\$10,000); or

36 (2) Tuition, room and board, required textbooks, and mandatory

1 fees charged for a regular full-time course load by the approved institution
2 in which the recipient is enrolled.

3
4 SECTION 9. EMERGENCY CLAUSE. It is found and determined by the
5 General Assembly that the state does not have the funds to support the
6 Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program in its current form; and that applicants
7 graduating after December 31, 2000, will experience uncertainty regarding
8 eligibility for the Arkansas Governor's Scholars Program; and that many
9 applicants may be delayed in beginning their post-secondary education unless
10 changes in the scholarship program become effective in sufficient time to
11 allow scholarship awards to be made to those students needing to make
12 enrollment decisions for the 2001-2002 academic year. Therefore, an
13 emergency is declared to exist and this act being immediately necessary for
14 the preservation of the public peace, health and safety shall become
15 effective on March 1, 2001.

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