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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE BILL

No. 1653 Session of  
2017

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INTRODUCED BY QUIGLEY, BLOOM, DeLUCA, GODSHALL, MILLARD AND  
MILNE, JULY 8, 2017

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REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JULY 8, 2017

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AN ACT

1 Amending the act of January 25, 1966 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541),  
2 entitled "An act providing scholarships and providing funds  
3 to secure Federal funds for qualified students of the  
4 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania who need financial assistance to  
5 attend postsecondary institutions of higher learning, making  
6 an appropriation, and providing for the administration of  
7 this act," further providing for eligibility for State  
8 scholarship.

9 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania  
10 hereby enacts as follows:

11 Section 1. Section 4(a)(6) of the act of January 25, 1966  
12 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541), referred to as the Higher Education  
13 Scholarship Law, is amended to read:

14 Section 4. (a) Any student is eligible for consideration  
15 for a State scholarship providing:

16 \* \* \*

17 (6) The State scholarship recipient shall be free to attend  
18 any approved institution of his choice and apply the scholarship  
19 toward the tuition, room, board, books and fees of that  
20 institution[.], subject to the following:

21 (i) The institution is not required to accept the

1 scholarship recipient for enrollment, but is free to exact  
2 compliance with its own admission requirements, standards and  
3 policies.

4 (ii) If the institution is headquartered and domiciled  
5 through incorporation or charter in this Commonwealth and the  
6 institution is an eligible school, as determined by the agency  
7 that participates in the program during the 2016-2017 award  
8 year, the scholarship recipient shall be eligible for the  
9 scholarship award regardless of whether the program of study or  
10 the scholarship recipient's term enrollment is 100% online or  
11 blended with classroom credits, provided that the scholarship  
12 recipient meets all other eligibility requirements as provided  
13 in this act and as established by the agency.

14 (iii) If the institution has a physical location in this  
15 Commonwealth but is not headquartered and domiciled through  
16 incorporation or charter in this Commonwealth, the scholarship  
17 recipient shall be eligible for a scholarship award provided  
18 that the scholarship recipient's program of study is not  
19 structured to be more than 50% online or the scholarship  
20 recipient's online enrollment in a given term does not exceed  
21 50% of the total credits for that term as established by the  
22 agency, provided that the scholarship recipient is enrolled at  
23 the institution's physical location in this Commonwealth and  
24 provided that the scholarship recipient meets all other  
25 eligibility requirements as provided in this act and as  
26 established by the agency.

27 (iv) The agency may require necessary data reporting  
28 requirements from participating schools, and the agency shall  
29 report to the General Assembly regarding the impact that online  
30 education has on the scholarship program under this act. The

1 report shall be submitted to the Governor and the chair and  
2 minority chair of the Appropriations Committee of the Senate,  
3 the chair and minority chair of the Appropriations Committee of  
4 the House of Representatives, the chair and minority chair of  
5 the Education Committee of the Senate and the chair and minority  
6 chair of the Education Committee of the House of  
7 Representatives.

8 (v) The board of directors may implement the necessary  
9 controls, with regard to subclauses (ii) and (iii), to limit the  
10 impact of online education and protect the purchasing power of  
11 the scholarship program under this act and as deemed necessary  
12 by the agency.

13 (vi) For the purpose of this paragraph, "purchasing power"  
14 shall be a mathematical formula, as determined by the agency,  
15 that compares the annual amount of the scholarship provided for  
16 by this act to the average tuition and fees as calculated by the  
17 agency.

18 \* \* \*

19 Section 2. The amendment of section 4(a)(6) of the act shall  
20 apply not later than the 2018-2019 award year as determined by  
21 the Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency.

22 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.