

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE BILL

No. 53 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY GREENLEAF, SCAVELLO, SCARNATI, VULAKOVICH, SCHWANK, FARNESE, BAKER, FONTANA, WARD, COSTA, HAYWOOD, HUGHES, BROWNE AND BREWSTER, JANUARY 12, 2017

AS AMENDED ON SECOND CONSIDERATION, JUNE 13, 2017

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:

1 (i) The institution is not required to accept the
2 scholarship recipient for enrollment, but is free to exact
3 compliance with its own admission requirements, standards and
4 policies.

5 (ii) If the institution is headquartered and domiciled
6 through incorporation or charter in this Commonwealth AND THE <--
7 INSTITUTION IS AN ELIGIBLE SCHOOL, AS DETERMINED BY THE AGENCY
8 THAT PARTICIPATES IN THE PROGRAM DURING THE 2016-2017 AWARD
9 YEAR, the scholarship recipient shall be eligible for the
10 scholarship award regardless of whether the program of study or
11 the scholarship recipient's term enrollment is 100% online or
12 blended with classroom credits, provided that the scholarship
13 recipient meets all other eligibility requirements as provided
14 in this act and as established by the agency.

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

28 (IV) THE AGENCY MAY REQUIRE NECESSARY DATA REPORTING <--
29 REQUIREMENTS FROM PARTICIPATING SCHOOLS, AND THE AGENCY SHALL
30 REPORT TO THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY REGARDING THE IMPACT THAT ONLINE

1 EDUCATION HAS ON THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UNDER THIS ACT. THE
2 REPORT SHALL BE SUBMITTED TO THE GOVERNOR AND THE CHAIR AND
3 MINORITY CHAIR OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE,
4 THE CHAIR AND MINORITY CHAIR OF THE APPROPRIATIONS COMMITTEE OF
5 THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, THE CHAIR AND MINORITY CHAIR OF
6 THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE SENATE AND THE CHAIR AND MINORITY
7 CHAIR OF THE EDUCATION COMMITTEE OF THE HOUSE OF
8 REPRESENTATIVES.

9 (V) THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS MAY IMPLEMENT THE NECESSARY
10 CONTROLS, WITH REGARD TO SUBCLAUSES (II) AND (III), TO LIMIT THE
11 IMPACT OF ONLINE EDUCATION AND PROTECT THE PURCHASING POWER OF
12 THE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UNDER THIS ACT AND AS DEEMED NECESSARY
13 BY THE AGENCY.

14 (VI) FOR THE PURPOSE OF THIS PARAGRAPH, "PURCHASING POWER"
15 SHALL BE A MATHEMATICAL FORMULA, AS DETERMINED BY THE AGENCY,
16 THAT COMPARES THE ANNUAL AMOUNT OF THE SCHOLARSHIP PROVIDED FOR
17 BY THIS ACT TO THE AVERAGE TUITION AND FEES AS CALCULATED BY THE
18 AGENCY.

19 * * *

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

23 Section 3. This act shall take effect immediately.