

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 2639 Session of 2022

INTRODUCED BY E. NELSON, BERNSTINE, BROOKS, COOK, DAVANZO, DOWLING, EMRICK, GROVE, HAMM, JONES, JOZWIAK, KAUFFMAN, KEEFER, LEWIS, MADDEN, MAJOR, MERCURI, MOUL, PENNYCUICK, RADER, ROWE, RYAN, SMITH, STRUZZI, ZIMMERMAN AND GLEIM, JUNE 1, 2022

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, JUNE 1, 2022

AN ACT

1 Amending the act of March 10, 1949 (P.L.30, No.14), entitled "An
 2 act relating to the public school system, including certain
 3 provisions applicable as well to private and parochial
 4 schools; amending, revising, consolidating and changing the
 5 laws relating thereto," in ready-to-succeed scholarship,
 6 further providing for agency; and providing for the Higher
 7 Education Alternative Student Grant Program.

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

10 Section 1. Section 2204-B(b) (1) of the act of March 10, 1949
 11 (P.L.30, No.14), known as the Public School Code of 1949, is
 12 amended to read:

13 Section 2204-B. Agency.

14 * * *

15 (b) Eligibility criteria.--The eligibility criteria
 16 developed for the receipt of a scholarship under subsection (a)
 17 shall, at a minimum, require all of the following:

18 (1) Total annual household income shall be set by the
 19 agency and may not [to] exceed [\$110,000] \$250,000. With each

1 new award year, the agency may annually adjust the total
2 annual household income threshold under this paragraph based
3 on the agency's available resources and to reflect any upward
4 changes in the Consumer Price Index for All Urban Consumers
5 (CPI-U) for the Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware and
6 Maryland area.

7 * * *

8 Section 2. The act is amended by adding an article to read:

9 ARTICLE XXII-C

10 HIGHER EDUCATION ALTERNATIVE STUDENT GRANT PROGRAM

11 Section 2201-C. Scope of article.

12 This article relates to the Higher Education Alternative
13 Student Grant Program.

14 Section 2202-C. Definitions.

15 The following words and phrases when used in this article
16 shall have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
17 context clearly indicates otherwise:

18 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
19 Agency.

20 "Committee." The Legislative Budget and Finance Committee.

21 "Grant program." The Higher Education Alternative Student
22 Grant Program established under section 2203-C.

23 "Ready-to-Succeed Scholarship Program." The program
24 established under Article XXII-B.

25 "State grant." A grant or scholarship awarded under the act
26 of January 25, 1966 (1965 P.L.1546, No.541), referred to as the
27 Higher Education Scholarship Law.

28 "Student grant." A grant awarded under this article.

29 "Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate Scholarship Program."
30 The program established under section 2599.4.

1 "University of Pittsburgh." The university, including its
2 regional campuses, established under the act of July 28, 1966
3 (3rd Sp.Sess., P.L.87, No.3), known as the University of
4 Pittsburgh--Commonwealth Act.

5 Section 2203-C. Establishment.

6 The Higher Education Alternative Student Grant Program is
7 established in the agency.

8 Section 2204-C. Student grant.

9 (a) General rule.--The agency shall use funds appropriated
10 for the purpose of this article to provide grants to eligible
11 students to defray the cost of attending the University of
12 Pittsburgh if the University of Pittsburgh agrees to provide a
13 matching grant to an eligible student in an amount equal to or
14 greater than the amount of the matching grant provided to a
15 university student during the 2021-2022 fiscal year.

16 (b) Eligibility criteria.--To be eligible for the receipt of
17 a student grant under subsection (a), a student shall be:

18 (1) a current resident of this Commonwealth; and

19 (2) a student who is enrolled in an undergraduate
20 program at the University of Pittsburgh for the 2022-2023
21 school year on at least a half-time basis as defined by the
22 university.

23 (c) Prorate.--The board of directors of the agency may
24 prorate the amount of the grant award for students who are
25 enrolled in an undergraduate program at a State-related
26 university on less than a full-time basis.

27 (d) Funding.--Funding for this article shall be as follows:

28 (1) For the 2022-2023 fiscal year, the grant program
29 shall be funded at an amount equal to the 2021-2022 fiscal
30 year nonpreferred general support appropriation for the

1 University of Pittsburgh.

2 (2) For the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the grant program
3 shall be funded at an amount equal to 75% of the 2021-2022
4 fiscal year nonpreferred general support appropriation for
5 the University of Pittsburgh.

6 (3) For the 2024-2025 fiscal year, the grant program
7 shall be funded at an amount equal to 50% of the 2021-2022
8 fiscal year nonpreferred general support appropriation for
9 the University of Pittsburgh.

10 (4) For the 2025-2026 fiscal year, the grant program
11 shall be funded at an amount equal to 25% of the 2021-2022
12 fiscal year nonpreferred general support appropriation for
13 the University of Pittsburgh.

14 (e) Combination.--A student of the University of Pittsburgh
15 may not be prohibited from receiving a student grant under
16 subsection (a) and a grant under the Pennsylvania State Grant
17 Program or other grants or loans as established by the agency,
18 provided the following apply:

19 (1) The amount of State-funded financial aid or grants
20 per academic year shall not exceed the cost of attendance at
21 the University of Pittsburgh.

22 (2) The amount of the grant award under the grant
23 program and the matching grant from the University of
24 Pittsburgh shall be applied before other State-funded
25 financial aid or grants.

26 (f) Guidelines.--The board of directors of the agency shall
27 have the authority to create guidelines for the administration
28 of the grant program.

29 Section 2205-C. Funding for other scholarship programs.

30 Beginning with the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the agency shall

1 receive an amount equal to the difference between the amount
2 appropriated for the grant program and the 2021-2022 fiscal year
3 nonpreferred general support appropriation for the University of
4 Pittsburgh. The agency shall distribute these funds on a pro
5 rata basis to the State grant, Ready-to-Succeed Scholarship
6 Program and Targeted Industry Cluster Certificate Scholarship
7 Program.

8 Section 2206-C. Divestiture.

9 (a) Study.--The committee shall conduct a study to establish
10 a process for removing a State-related designation from
11 postsecondary institutions in the Commonwealth. The study shall
12 include the following:

13 (1) A process to return a State-related institution to a
14 status as a private institution of higher education within
15 five years of the effective date of this paragraph.

16 (2) A process for the phased removal of Commonwealth-
17 appointed Board of Trustees members from the board of a
18 State-related institution.

19 (3) Identifying any and all existing Commonwealth
20 statutes that would need to be amended or repealed in order
21 to remove the State-related status of a postsecondary
22 institution.

23 (4) Identifying all Commonwealth-owned property and
24 buildings on a State-related institution's campuses and a
25 recommendation on the transfer or sale of that property to
26 the State-related institution.

27 (5) An assessment of any potential fiscal impacts
28 incurred by the institution due to the loss of its State-
29 related status.

30 (b) Report submission.--The committee shall submit a final

1 report with recommendations to the General Assembly no later
2 than May 1, 2023, for review and any appropriate legislative
3 action.

4 (c) Definition.--For the purposes of this section, a "State-
5 related institution" shall mean The Pennsylvania State
6 University, the University of Pittsburgh and Temple University
7 and any branch campus.

8 Section 3. This act shall take effect as follows:

9 (1) This section shall take effect immediately.

10 (2) The addition of Article XXII-C shall take effect
11 July 1, 2022, or immediately, whichever occurs first.

12 (3) The remainder of this act shall take effect July 1,
13 2023.