
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE BILL

No. 435 Session of
2001

INTRODUCED BY ALLEN, RAYMOND, COY, PHILLIPS, ARGALL, M. BAKER,
BARRAR, BEBKO-JONES, BELARDI, BELFANTI, BISHOP, BUNT,
CALTAGIRONE, CAPPELLI, CLARK, L. I. COHEN, CORRIGAN, COSTA,
CRUZ, DALLY, DeLUCA, DeWEESE, FAIRCHILD, FRANKEL, FREEMAN,
GEIST, GEORGE, GRUCELA, HARHAI, HENNESSEY, HERMAN, HERSHEY,
HESS, HUTCHINSON, KENNEY, LaGROTTA, LAUGHLIN, McCALL,
McILHATTAN, OLIVER, ORIE, PRESTON, READSHAW, ROHRER, ROSS,
RUBLEY, SATHER, SAYLOR, SCHULER, SEMMEL, SHANER, SOLOBAY,
STABACK, STEELMAN, J. TAYLOR, THOMAS, TRELLO, WASHINGTON,
C. WILLIAMS, WOGAN, WOJNAROSKI, YOUNGBLOOD, ZUG AND EACHUS,
FEBRUARY 5, 2001

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, FEBRUARY 5, 2001

AN ACT

1 Establishing the Keystone Scholars Award recognizing and
2 rewarding excellence in academic achievement and performance
3 among graduating seniors in this Commonwealth's public
4 secondary schools.

5 The General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
6 hereby enacts as follows:

7 Section 1. Short title.

8 This act shall be known and may be cited as the Keystone
9 Scholars Award Act.

10 Section 2. Purpose.

11 The Keystone Scholars Award is hereby established within the
12 Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance Agency to recognize and
13 reward excellence in academic achievement and performance by
14 selected public secondary school seniors in this Commonwealth

1 and to encourage them to attend institutions of higher education
2 within this Commonwealth.

3 Section 3. Definitions.

4 The following words and phrases when used in this act shall
5 have the meanings given to them in this section unless the
6 context clearly indicates otherwise:

7 "Agency." The Pennsylvania Higher Education Assistance
8 Agency.

9 "Award." The Keystone Scholars Award established under this
10 act.

11 "Board." The board of school directors of a school district,
12 a joint board or an area vocational-technical school or the
13 board of trustees of a charter school.

14 "Eligible institution." A State-owned, State-related or
15 private institution of higher education or a community college
16 in this Commonwealth.

17 "School entity." A public school district, joint school,
18 charter school or area vocational-technical school.

19 Section 4. Selection process.

20 (a) Member of senior class.--Each school entity shall
21 annually select, for each of its secondary schools, a student
22 who is a member of the senior class and who exemplifies
23 qualities of high academic achievement and excellence in
24 performance as the recipient of the award.

25 (b) Criteria and procedures.--Each board shall adopt a
26 policy setting the criteria and procedures to be used in
27 selecting its award recipient which shall, at a minimum, comply
28 with the requirements of section 5. The award shall be made
29 without regard to the student's race, creed, color, sex,
30 national origin or ancestry.

(c) Presentation of award.--The award shall be presented to the recipient at the school entity's annual commencement exercises.

Section 5. Minimum qualifications.

At a minimum, a candidate for the award shall:

(1) Be a current twelfth grade student enrolled at a Commonwealth public secondary school, charter school or area vocational-technical school.

(2) Be a legal resident of this Commonwealth.

(3) Hold a 3.5 grade point average, on a scale of 4.0, by the end of the student's junior year.

(4) Attain a composite score of 1200 or higher on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), or equivalent American College Test (ACT) score, on any single test administration.

(5) Rank academically in the top 5% of the student's graduating class.

(6) Have been accepted for admission in the fall term immediately following secondary school graduation as a full-time student in an eligible institution.

(7) Have a history of participation in extracurricular activities, community service or work experience while enrolled at the awarding high school.

Section 6. Award.

(a) Amount.--Each student selected by a school entity shall be presented an initial award of \$1,000, to a maximum of \$4,000, and shall be referred to as a Keystone Scholar.

(b) Use of award.--The award recipient shall be free to attend any eligible institution of the recipient's choice and shall apply the award toward the tuition, room, board, books and fees of that institution. The eligible institution is not

1 required to accept the award recipient, but is free to exact
2 compliance with its own admission requirements, standards and
3 policies.

4 Section 7. Renewal of award.

5 (a) Renewal period.--Each award is renewable annually for a
6 period not to exceed an additional three academic years beyond
7 the first year of the award.

8 (b) Qualifications for renewal.--Qualifications for annual
9 renewal of the award include the following:

10 (1) Maintaining a minimum grade point average of 3.0 or
11 higher on a scale of 4.0, or its equivalent.

12 (2) Making normal progress toward completion of a course
13 of study.

14 (3) Continued eligibility as determined by the agency,
15 including continued legal residency and enrollment in an
16 institution of higher education located within this
17 Commonwealth.

18 Section 8. Powers and duties of agency.

19 (a) Public information.--The agency shall prepare and
20 supervise the issuance of public information concerning the
21 provisions of the award.

22 (b) Submission of information.--The agency shall prescribe
23 the form, set time lines and regulate the submission of
24 information from each school entity regarding the selection of
25 its recipient of the award.

26 (c) Initial award.--The agency shall establish procedures
27 for making the initial award to the recipients and for annual
28 renewal of the awards.

29 (d) Disbursement of funds.--The agency is authorized to
30 disburse awards from funds specifically appropriated for the

1 purposes of this act.

2 (e) Rules and regulations.--The agency shall have the power
3 to adopt rules and regulations to implement, administer and
4 enforce this act.

5 Section 8. Miscellaneous provisions.

6 (a) Exclusion from taxable income.--Awards received by a
7 student under this act shall not be considered taxable income
8 for purposes of Article III of the act of March 4, 1971 (P.L.6,
9 No.2), known as the Tax Reform Code of 1971.

10 (b) Eligible institution unaffected.--Awards received by
11 students under this act shall not be considered financial
12 assistance or appropriations to the eligible institutions.

13 Section 9. Effective date.

14 This act shall take effect in 90 days.