

SB 787

THE STATE SENATE
Tuesday, February 23, 1999

Senate Bill No. 787
As Amended

SENATE BILL NO. 787 - By: MORGAN, CRUTCHFIELD, HORNER, KERR and WILLIAMS of the Senate and WELLS of the House.

[higher education - creating the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Act - effective date - emergency]

BE IT ENACTED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF OKLAHOMA:

SECTION 1. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2701 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

This act shall be known and may be cited as the "Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2702 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

There is hereby created the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program. The purpose of the Program is to enhance economic growth in the state through increasing the number of college graduates. All students who meet the criteria set forth in the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program, who have completed college preparatory curriculum upon graduation from high school, and who intend to pursue studies in this state leading to an associate or baccalaureate degree or to

1 pursue studies in a postsecondary vocational-technical program or
2 course offered pursuant to a duly approved cooperative agreement
3 between an area vocational-technical school and an institution
4 within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education will be
5 eligible for payment from the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Trust Fund
6 of up to four (4) years of their undergraduate general enrollment
7 fees at an institution within The Oklahoma State System of Higher
8 Education or tuition for enrollment in postsecondary programs of the
9 area vocational-technical districts.

10 SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
11 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2703 of Title 70, unless there
12 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

13 A. To be eligible to participate in the Oklahoma Tuition
14 Incentive Program and to qualify for payment of general enrollment
15 fees or tuition pursuant to Section 4 of this act, a student shall:

16 1. Be a resident of this state;
17 2. Have graduated from a high school accredited by the State
18 Board of Education, or the Oklahoma School of Science and
19 Mathematics;

20 3. Have satisfied admission standards as determined by the
21 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and as required for the
22 institution that the student will be attending, provided, no payment
23 from the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Trust Fund shall be made on

1 behalf of a student admitted into an institution of higher education
2 by special admission standards; and

3 4. Have secured admission to, and enrolled in, an institution
4 within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education or a
5 postsecondary vocational-technical program or course offered
6 pursuant to a duly approved cooperative agreement between an area
7 vocational-technical school and an institution within The Oklahoma
8 State System of Higher Education.

9 B. To retain eligibility while pursuing the postsecondary
10 program in which enrolled, the student shall:

11 1. Maintain good academic standing and satisfactory academic
12 progress according to standards of the Oklahoma State Regents for
13 Higher Education; and

14 2. Comply with the standards related to maintenance of
15 eligibility as promulgated by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
16 Education.

17 C. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall
18 promulgate rules relating to maintenance of eligibility under the
19 Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program by a student.

20 SECTION 4. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
21 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2704 of Title 70, unless there
22 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

1 A. Subject to the availability of funds, the general enrollment
2 fees for which a student eligible for the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive
3 Program is obligated at an institution of The Oklahoma State System
4 of Higher Education and tuition for any eligible student enrolled in
5 a public postsecondary vocational-technical program or course
6 offered pursuant to a cooperative agreement as set forth in Section
7 2 of this act shall be satisfied by allocation from the Oklahoma
8 Tuition Incentive Trust Fund.

9 B. Satisfaction of general enrollment fees or tuition allowed
10 by this section shall not be allowed for courses or other
11 postsecondary units taken in excess of the requirements for
12 completion of a two-year program at an area vocational-technical
13 school, an associate degree at a junior college or a baccalaureate
14 program at a regional or comprehensive university. The Oklahoma
15 State Regents for Higher Education may establish a maximum limit on
16 the number of courses or other postsecondary units which shall be
17 the equivalent of full-time enrollment for which Oklahoma Tuition
18 Incentive Program benefits will apply.

19 C. Subject to the provisions of subsection D of this section,
20 if funds are not sufficient to provide awards for all eligible
21 applicants, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall
22 make awards on the basis of need. Provided, the Oklahoma State
23 Regents for Higher Education shall take into consideration other

1 grants and scholarships received by an eligible applicant when
2 making awards.

3 D. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at the
4 time an award is made on behalf of an Oklahoma Tuition Incentive
5 Program student, set aside in the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Trust
6 Fund funds for the full commitment made to such Tuition Incentive
7 Program student. For all academic years, students who have
8 previously received awards under the provisions of the Oklahoma
9 Tuition Incentive Act and who have continued at all times to fulfill
10 the requirements for eligibility to receive awards provided pursuant
11 to this program shall be given an absolute priority for continued
12 financial support by the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program superior
13 to any students who are applying for such benefits for the first
14 time.

15 SECTION 5. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
16 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2705 of Title 70, unless there
17 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

18 Each school year, every eighth- through twelfth-grade student in
19 the public schools of this state shall be apprised, together with
20 the student's parent, custodial parent, or guardian, of the
21 opportunity provided by the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program. The
22 Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and the State Board of
23 Education shall develop, promote, and coordinate a public awareness

1 program for making students and parents aware of the Oklahoma
2 Tuition Incentive Program.

3 SECTION 6. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
4 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 3953.2 of Title 70, unless there
5 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

6 A. There is hereby created a trust fund to be known as the
7 "Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Trust Fund". The Oklahoma State Regents
8 for Higher Education shall be the trustees of said Trust Fund. The
9 fund shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year
10 limitations.

11 B. The State Regents shall utilize said Trust Fund to implement
12 the provisions of Sections 1 through 4 of this act.

13 C. The Trust Fund principal shall consist of monies the
14 Legislature appropriates or transfers to the Oklahoma State Regents
15 for Higher Education for the Trust Fund and any monies or assets
16 contributed to the Trust Fund from any other source, public or
17 private.

18 D. Notwithstanding other provisions of law, income and
19 investment return on Trust Fund principal shall accrue to the Trust
20 Fund for use as provided by authorization of the trustees for the
21 purposes provided in Sections 1 through 4 of this act. The State
22 Regents may also utilize the Trust Fund principal for the purposes
23 provided in Sections 1 through 4 of this act. Except as otherwise

1 provided by law, no such income, investment return or principal
2 shall be used for administrative expenses; expenses incurred by the
3 State Regents in the administration of the Trust Fund and of the
4 Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Program established by this act shall be
5 paid from monies appropriated to the State Regents coordinating
6 board for their general operating budget.

7 E. The Regents shall adopt rules for accomplishing transfer of
8 funds from the Oklahoma Tuition Incentive Trust Fund to the
9 appropriate institutional Educational and General Operations
10 Revolving Funds, as provided in Section 3901 of this title, to cover
11 general enrollment fees or tuition for eligible students pursuant to
12 this act. Allocations from the Trust Fund may be made only for the
13 purpose of covering the general enrollment fees or tuition of
14 eligible students. No portion of the Trust Fund may be used or
15 allocated for administrative or operating expenses of any higher
16 education institution.

17 SECTION 7. This act shall become effective July 1, 1999.

18 SECTION 8. It being immediately necessary for the preservation
19 of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby
20 declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and
21 be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

22 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS, dated 2-17-99 - DO
23 PASS, As Amended and Coauthored.