

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

1st Session of the 48th Legislature (2001)

SENATE BILL 586

By: Henry

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to higher education; creating the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Act; providing short title; creating the Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Program; stating purpose; providing criteria for eligibility; stating amount of grant; providing procedures for payment of grants; authorizing the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education to implement policies and procedures to administer grant program; stating requirements for eligible institutions; providing for codification; providing effective date; and declaring an 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 2620 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 Equalization Grant Act".

SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2621 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

There is hereby created the "Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant Program". The purpose of this program is to provide the maximum possible utilization of existing educational resources and facilities within this state, both public and private. To accomplish this purpose, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education are authorized to award tuition equalization grants to Oklahoma residents enrolled as undergraduate students in any approved private or independent institution of higher education in this state.

SECTION 3. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2622 of Title 70, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. To be eligible for a tuition equalization grant, a student shall:

1. Be an Oklahoma resident as defined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education;

2. Have enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student in an eligible institution of higher education, as prescribed in subsection D of this section;

3. Meet the income eligibility level, which is the student's parent(s) income from taxable and nontaxable sources which shall not be more than Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00) per year;

4. Pay more tuition than is required at a comparable public institution of higher education and pay no less than the regular tuition required of all students enrolled at the institution where such student is enrolled; and

5. Maintain minimum standards of academic performance as required by the enrolling institution.

B. The amount of an Oklahoma Tuition Equalization Grant shall be Two Thousand Dollars (\$2,000.00) per academic year, or One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per academic semester, beginning with eligible students enrolled in the 2001-2002 school year. No tuition equalization grants shall be provided to students for attending summer terms or intersessions. In subsequent years, the amount of the grant shall be increased by a percentage that is equal to the annual weighted percentage of increase in tuition for all public institutions within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

C. The enrolling institution shall forward a student application, documentation of full-time enrollment status, and certification of resident status to the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education no later than October 15 for the fall semester and

March 15 for the spring semester of each academic year. Subject to the availability of funds, the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall award a tuition equalization grant to an eligible student through the institution of higher education in which the student is enrolled.

D. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education shall implement policies and procedures for the administration of this act and shall approve as eligible institutions of higher education only those private or independent, not-for-profit, colleges or universities as are domiciled within this state, which meet approved program and accreditation standards as determined by the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education and as are fully accredited by the North Central Commission on Colleges and Schools.

SECTION 4. This act shall become effective July 1, 2001.

SECTION 5. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

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