

THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Tuesday, April 8, 2008

Committee Substitute for
ENGROSSED
Senate Bill No. 1988

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 1988 - By:
LAUGHLIN, GARRISON, BASS AND CORN of the Senate and BLACKWELL of the
House.

An Act relating to higher education; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 2604, which relates to the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program; authorizing awards for students ordered to certain military service in certain circumstances; extending certain time period limitation; amending 70 O.S. 2001, Section 16-111.1, which relates to textbooks; updating statutory reference; authorizing local textbook committees to recommend certain textbooks for purchase by district; authorizing school districts to purchase certain textbooks using certain funds; providing an effective date; and declaring an emergency.

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

- 1 SECTION 1. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 2604, is amended to read
2 as follows:
- 3 Section 2604. A. Subject to the availability of funds, an amount equivalent to the
4 resident tuition for which an eligible Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program
5 student is obligated at an institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education
6 shall be awarded by allocation from the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust Fund.

1 B. Subject to the availability of funds, for each eligible Oklahoma Higher Learning
2 Access Program student enrolled at a private institution of higher learning located
3 within this state and accredited pursuant to Section 4103 of this title, the Oklahoma
4 State Regents for Higher Education shall award from the Oklahoma Higher Learning
5 Access Trust Fund an amount equivalent to the amount of resident tuition for which the
6 student would be eligible if the student were enrolled in a comparable program at a
7 comparable institution of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.
8 Comparability shall be determined by the State Regents.

9 C. Subject to the availability of funds, an amount equivalent to the tuition for any
10 eligible Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program student enrolled in a public
11 postsecondary vocational-technical program or course for the purpose set forth in Section
12 2602 of this title shall be awarded by allocation from the Oklahoma Higher Learning
13 Access Trust Fund. Provided, such allocation shall not exceed the amount a student
14 would have received for comparable enrollment at a two-year institution within The
15 Oklahoma State System of Higher Education.

16 D. 1. An award allowed by this section shall not be allowed for courses or other
17 postsecondary units taken in excess of the requirements for completion of a
18 baccalaureate program or taken more than five (5) years after the student's first
19 semester of postsecondary enrollment. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher
20 Education may award the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program benefits for
21 courses of postsecondary units taken more than five (5) years after the student's first
22 semester of postsecondary enrollment only in hardship circumstances; provided,

1 however, no Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program participant may receive
2 benefits beyond a cumulative time period of five (5) years.

3 2. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may award the Oklahoma
4 Higher Learning Access Program benefits for a student's first semester or other academic
5 unit of postsecondary enrollment taken more than three (3) years after the student
6 graduates from high school or completes an educational program equivalent to high
7 school graduation as authorized in Section 2603 of this title if the student is a member of
8 the Armed Forces of the United States, the Reserve Corps of the Armed Forces of the
9 United States, or the Oklahoma National Guard, and is ordered to active duty or active
10 duty for special work or training and due to the duty commitment the student is unable
11 to enroll prior to the end of the three-year period. The three-year period shall be
12 extended by the length of the term of duty.

13 3. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may establish a maximum
14 limit on the number of courses or other postsecondary units to which Oklahoma Higher
15 Learning Access Program benefits will apply.

16 4. An award for eligible Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program students
17 enrolled in cooperative programs pursuant to agreements between technology center
18 schools and institutions of The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education shall be
19 satisfied for both vocational-technical and college work in which enrolled pursuant to
20 such cooperative program.

21 E. Benefits awarded under the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program shall
22 be awarded to all eligible applicants without any limitation on the number of awards in

1 any year other than the amount of funds available for the program and the number of
2 eligible applicants. Subject to the provisions of subsection F of this section, if funds are
3 not sufficient to provide awards for all eligible applicants, the Oklahoma State Regents
4 for Higher Education shall make awards on the basis of need. Provided, the Oklahoma
5 State Regents for Higher Education shall take into consideration other grants and
6 scholarships received by an eligible applicant when making awards.

7 F. The Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education may, at the time an award is
8 made on behalf of an Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Program student, set aside in
9 the Oklahoma Higher Learning Access Trust Fund funds for the full commitment made
10 to such Higher Learning Access Program student. For all academic years, students who
11 have previously received awards under the provisions of the Oklahoma Higher Learning
12 Access Act, Section 2601 et seq. of this title, and who have continued at all times to fulfill
13 the requirements for eligibility to receive awards provided pursuant to this program shall
14 be given an absolute priority for continued financial support by the Oklahoma Higher
15 Learning Access Program superior to any students who are applying for such benefits for
16 the first time.

17 SECTION 2. AMENDATORY 70 O.S. 2001, Section 16-111.1, is amended to
18 read as follows:

19 Section 16-111.1 A. Twenty percent (20%) of the funds allocated for textbooks in
20 Section ~~16-114~~ 16-114a of this title may be used by a school district for supplementary
21 textbooks and other instructional materials other than those selected and listed by the
22 State Textbook Committee.

1 B. Local textbook committees may recommend to school districts textbooks other
2 than those selected and listed by the State Textbook Committee, and school districts may
3 purchase textbooks so recommended by local textbook committees using funds allocated
4 for textbooks in Section 16-114a of this title.

5 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective July 1, 2008.

6 SECTION 4. It being immediately necessary for the preservation of the public
7 peace, health and safety, an emergency is hereby declared to exist, by reason whereof
8 this act shall take effect and be in full force from and after its passage and approval.

9 COMMITTEE REPORT BY: COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION, dated 04-07-08 - DO
10 PASS, As Amended.