

STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 58th Legislature (2022)

SENATE BILL 1614

By: David

AS INTRODUCED

An Act relating to the Oklahoma Highway Patrol; providing definitions; creating the Oklahoma Highway Patrol Educational Assistance Program to provide tuition to certain eligible officers; providing for amount of assistance subject to availability of funding; limiting assistance to certain number of credit hours; providing eligibility requirements; providing eligibility retention requirements; providing application process; allowing denial of continued assistance for failure to meet certain requirements; creating the Oklahoma Highway Patrol Educational Assistance Revolving Fund; specifying source of fund; providing for expenditures; providing purpose of fund; providing for codification; and providing an effective date.

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 2-105C of Title 47, unless there is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

A. As used in this act:

1. "Oklahoma educational institution" means an institution of higher education within The Oklahoma State System of Higher Education;

1 2. "Eligible Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer" means a current
2 officer in good standing who has either an associate's degree or a
3 minimum of sixty-two (62) successfully completed semester hours from
4 an accredited college or university and whose hours are transferable
5 between recognized institutions;

6 3. "Program" means the Oklahoma Highway Patrol Educational
7 Assistance Program established pursuant to the provisions of this
8 section; and

9 4. "Undergraduate program" means a program offered by an
10 Oklahoma educational institution that leads to the award of a
11 baccalaureate degree.

12 B. There is hereby created the Oklahoma Highway Patrol
13 Educational Assistance Program to provide assistance to eligible
14 Highway Patrol officers who enroll in an Oklahoma educational
15 institution. Subject to availability of funds, the amount of
16 assistance shall be equivalent to the amount of resident tuition for
17 courses in which the eligible Highway Patrol officer is enrolled,
18 not to exceed a maximum of eighteen (18) credit hours each semester.

19 1. The amount of assistance provided to an eligible Highway
20 Patrol officer in an undergraduate program shall not exceed a
21 maximum of sixty (60) credit hours in pursuit of a baccalaureate
22 degree.

23 2. Assistance provided pursuant to this section shall be
24 granted without limitation other than the amount of funds available

1 for the Program and the number of eligible Highway Patrol officers
2 who apply.

3 3. Assistance allowed by this section shall not be allowed for
4 courses taken in excess of the requirements for completion of an
5 undergraduate program for the eligible Highway Patrol officer.

6 C. Assistance provided pursuant to this section shall be
7 allocated to the Oklahoma education institution from the Oklahoma
8 Highway Patrol Educational Assistance Revolving Fund created
9 pursuant to Section 2 of this act.

10 D. 1. To be eligible to apply for the Program, an eligible
11 Highway Patrol officer shall agree in writing to continue in service
12 as a Highway Patrol officer in good standing for not less than
13 twenty-four (24) months after completion of the last semester for
14 which the officer receives assistance pursuant to this section.

15 2. To retain eligibility for the Program, an eligible Highway
16 Patrol officer shall:

- 17 a. maintain good academic standing and satisfactory
18 academic progress according to standards of the
19 Oklahoma educational institution in which the officer
20 is enrolled,
21 b. maintain the requirements for retention and degree
22 completion as established by the Oklahoma educational
23 institution in which the member is enrolled,
24

- c. maintain a minimum grade point average of 2.0 on a 4.0 scale, and
- d. maintain satisfactory performance in the Oklahoma Highway Patrol.

E. An eligible Oklahoma Highway Patrol officer seeking assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section shall submit an application on a form prescribed by the Oklahoma Highway Patrol prior to the semester for which assistance is sought. The Chief of the Oklahoma Highway Patrol, or his or her designee, shall confirm a member's standing and eligibility to the Oklahoma educational institution in which the student is enrolled.

F. The Chief of the Highway Patrol may deny an application submitted by an eligible Highway Patrol officer for continued Program assistance if he or she fails to comply with the provisions of this section.

G. An eligible Highway Patrol officer who has received Program assistance pursuant to the provisions of this section and who fails to comply with the provisions of this section shall be required to repay an amount to be determined by rules promulgated by the Department of Public Safety.

H. The Department of Public Safety shall promulgate rules to implement the provisions of this act.

1 SECTION 2. NEW LAW A new section of law to be codified
2 in the Oklahoma Statutes as Section 2-105D of Title 47, unless there
3 is created a duplication in numbering, reads as follows:

4 There is hereby created in the State Treasury a revolving fund
5 for the Oklahoma Highway Patrol to be designated the "Oklahoma
6 Highway Patrol Educational Assistance Revolving Fund". The fund
7 shall be a continuing fund, not subject to fiscal year limitations,
8 and shall consist of all monies received by the Department of Public
9 Safety from state appropriations. All monies accruing to the credit
10 of the fund are hereby appropriated and may be budgeted and expended
11 by the Department of Public Safety for the purpose of providing
12 assistance to eligible Highway Patrol officers pursuant to the
13 provisions of Section 1 of this act. Expenditures from the fund
14 shall be made upon warrants issued by the State Treasurer against
15 claims filed as prescribed by law with the Director of the Office of
16 Management and Enterprise Services for approval and payment.

17 SECTION 3. This act shall become effective November 1, 2022.
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