

The Senate Higher Education Committee offered the following substitute to SB 496:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Part 7 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
2 Annotated, relating to HOPE scholarships and grants, so as to establish the HOPE college
3 opportunity grant; to provide for a definition; to provide for eligibility requirements; to
4 provide for scholarship amounts; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws;
5 and for other purposes.

6 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

SECTION 1.

7
8 Part 7 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
9 relating to HOPE scholarships and grants, is amended by adding a new paragraph to Code
10 Section 20-3-519, relating to definitions, to read as follows:

11 "(13.1) 'HOPE college opportunity grant' means a Helping Outstanding Pupils
12 Educationally college opportunity grant for education awarded in accordance with Code
13 Section 20-3-519.4."

SECTION 2.

14
15 Said part is further amended by revising Code Section 20-2-519.4, which is reserved, as
16 follows:

17 "20-3-519.4.

18 (a) To be eligible for a HOPE college opportunity grant, a student seeking an associate or
19 baccalaureate degree at an eligible public postsecondary institution shall:

20 (1) Meet residency requirements by:

21 (A) Meeting the requirements to be classified as a legal resident of Georgia as
22 established by the program regulations promulgated by the Georgia Student Finance
23 Commission which shall be based upon the in-state tuition policy of the board of
24 regents and the in-state tuition guidelines set by the Technical College System of
25 Georgia; and

26 (B)(i) If the student was classified as a legal resident of Georgia at the time of
 27 graduation from high school or from a home study program meeting the requirements
 28 of Code Section 20-2-690, then the student must have met the requirements set forth
 29 in subparagraph (A) of this paragraph for a period of at least 12 months immediately
 30 prior to the first day of classes for which the HOPE college opportunity grant is to be
 31 awarded; or

32 (ii) If the student was not classified as a legal resident at the time of graduation from
 33 high school or from a home study program meeting the requirements of Code Section
 34 20-2-690, then the student must have met the requirements set forth in subparagraph
 35 (A) of this paragraph for a period of at least 24 months immediately prior to the first
 36 day of classes for which the HOPE college opportunity grant is to be awarded.

37 Notwithstanding the foregoing, a dependent child of military personnel stationed in
 38 Georgia shall be deemed to be a legal resident of Georgia and, subject to meeting all other
 39 eligibility requirements, shall be eligible to receive the HOPE college opportunity grant as
 40 a freshman if the student graduated from a high school located in Georgia or from a home
 41 study program meeting the requirements of Code Section 20-2-690 that is located in
 42 Georgia;

43 (2) Meet enrollment standards by being admitted, enrolled, and classified as a full-time
 44 undergraduate student in a matriculated status at an eligible public postsecondary
 45 institution and by maintaining satisfactory academic progress in a course of study in
 46 accordance with the standards and practices used for federal Title IV programs by the
 47 eligible public postsecondary institution in which the student is enrolled;

48 (3) Meet further eligibility standards established by the Georgia Student Finance
 49 Commission which shall include criteria aimed at serving the neediest students; and

50 (4) Be a recipient of federal educational assistance funds awarded under the federal Pell
 51 Grant Program for any semester or quarter for which a HOPE college opportunity grant
 52 is sought under this Code section.

53 (b)(1) Except as set out in paragraph (2) of this subsection, a student may receive the
 54 HOPE college opportunity grant until the first of these events:

55 (A) The student has earned a baccalaureate degree; or

56 (B) The student has attempted at any postsecondary institution a total of 190 quarter
 57 hours or 127 semester hours.

58 (2) A student enrolled in an undergraduate or first professional degree program designed
 59 to be more than 190 quarter hours or 127 semester hours in length is eligible to receive
 60 the HOPE college opportunity grant for a total of 225 attempted quarter hours or 150
 61 attempted semester hours.

62 (c) A HOPE college opportunity grant may be applied to any portion of the student's cost
63 of attendance as defined by the eligible public postsecondary institution that the student is
64 attending.

65 (d) Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly, the Georgia Student Finance
66 Commission shall determine HOPE college opportunity grant award amounts, which may
67 be determined on a sliding scale based on income. It is the intent of the General Assembly
68 that the HOPE college opportunity grants awarded pursuant to this Code section be targeted
69 at the neediest students. If at any time the commission determines that the funds available
70 to the commission are not sufficient to pay the grant to all eligible students, grants payable
71 for the remaining school terms shall be reduced by the commission on a pro rata basis.

72 (e) The funds necessary to provide for the HOPE college opportunity grants provided for
73 in this Code section shall come from and be subject to the amounts appropriated by the
74 General Assembly and provisions relating to the scholarship shortfall reserve subaccount
75 in Code Section 50-27-13.

76 **Reserved."**

77 **SECTION 3.**

78 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.