

House Bill 54

By: Representative Waites of the 60th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Subpart 7 of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of
2 Georgia Annotated, relating to grants to children of law enforcement officers, firefighters,
3 and prison guards, so as to provide for undergraduate full tuition grants to children of law
4 enforcement officers, firefighters, prison guards, and Highway Emergency Response
5 Operators of the Department of Transportation who were killed in the line of duty who attend
6 institutions of the University System of Georgia and who meet certain eligibility
7 requirements; to provide a definition; to provide for voluntary donations through state
8 income tax returns and drivers' licenses for funding; to provide for related matters; to repeal
9 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

10 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

11 **SECTION 1.**

12 Subpart 7 of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
13 Annotated, relating to grants to children of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and prison
14 guards, is amended by revising Code Section 20-3-452, relating to annual amount of grants
15 to each eligible student, as follows:

16 "20-3-452.

17 (a) There is granted to each eligible student attending an approved school the sum of
18 \$2,000.00 per academic year. No person shall be eligible to receive grant assistance
19 provided under this subpart in excess of \$8,000.00. Grant assistance to eligible students
20 under this subpart shall be payable during the period of a summer school quarter or
21 semester. The payment of grants to eligible students under this subpart shall be contingent
22 upon the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for the purposes of this subpart
23 in annual appropriations Acts of the General Assembly.

24 (b)(1) An eligible student who is the child, either natural or adopted, of a law
25 enforcement officer, firefighter, prison guard, or Highway Emergency Response Operator
26 of the Department of Transportation who was killed in the line of duty or while

27 performing the duties to which he or she was assigned in the normal course of his or her
 28 employment and who attends an institution of the University System of Georgia as an
 29 undergraduate student is granted a sum per academic year equal to the full amount of
 30 tuition to attend such institution for such academic year, so long as the eligible student
 31 is less than 22 years of age and maintains a cumulative grade point average of 2.5 or
 32 greater while attending such institution, which shall be measured at the end of each
 33 academic year to determine the student's eligibility for such grant for the following
 34 academic year. The grant provided for in this subsection shall be in lieu of and not in
 35 addition to the grant provided for in subsection (a) of this Code section. The payment of
 36 grants to eligible students under this subsection shall be contingent upon the
 37 appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for the purposes of this subsection in
 38 annual appropriations Acts of the General Assembly and the receipt of voluntary
 39 contributions under paragraphs (2) and (3) of this subsection.

40 (2)(A) Unless an earlier date is deemed feasible and established by the Governor, each
 41 Georgia income tax return form for taxable years beginning on or after January 1, 2016,
 42 shall contain appropriate language, to be determined by the state revenue commissioner,
 43 offering the taxpayer the opportunity to contribute to the funding of the grants
 44 established in paragraph (1) of this subsection by either donating all or any part of any
 45 tax refund due, by authorizing a reduction in the refund check otherwise payable, or by
 46 contributing any amount over and above any amount of tax owed by adding that
 47 amount to the taxpayer's payment. The instructions accompanying the income tax
 48 return form shall contain a description of the purposes for which the grants were
 49 established and the intended use of moneys received from the contributions. Each
 50 taxpayer required to file a state income tax return who desires to contribute may
 51 designate such contribution as provided in this paragraph on the appropriate income tax
 52 return form.

53 (B) The Department of Revenue shall determine annually the total amount so
 54 contributed, shall withhold therefrom a reasonable amount for administering this
 55 voluntary contribution program, and shall transmit the balance to the authority for
 56 funding, in whole or in part, the grants provided for in this subsection. If, in any tax
 57 year, the administrative costs of the Department of Revenue for collecting contributions
 58 pursuant to this paragraph exceed the sum of such contributions, the administrative
 59 costs which the Department of Revenue is authorized to withhold from such
 60 contributions shall not exceed the sum of such contributions.

61 (3) Beginning January 1, 2016, the Department of Driver Services shall, through
 62 appropriate language on its forms for the issuance and renewal of drivers' licenses and
 63 identification cards, offer individuals the opportunity to make voluntary contributions for

64 the funding of the grants established in paragraph (1) of this subsection. The form shall
65 contain a description of the purposes for which the grants were established and the
66 intended use of moneys received from the contributions. Each individual who desires to
67 contribute may designate such contribution on the appropriate form, and the Department
68 of Driver Services shall accept such contribution. The Department of Driver Services
69 shall determine annually the total amount so contributed, shall withhold therefrom a
70 reasonable amount for administering this voluntary contribution program, and shall
71 transmit the balance to the authority for funding, in whole or in part, the grants provided
72 for in this subsection. If, in any tax year, the administrative costs of the Department of
73 Driver Services for collecting contributions pursuant to this paragraph exceed the sum of
74 such contributions, the administrative costs which the Department of Driver Services is
75 authorized to withhold from such contributions shall not exceed the sum of such
76 contributions."

77 **SECTION 2.**

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