

House Bill 291 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Dempsey of the 13<sup>th</sup>, Martin of the 49<sup>th</sup>, Smyre of the 135<sup>th</sup>, Ehrhart of the 36<sup>th</sup>, and Parrish of the 158<sup>th</sup>

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-3-411 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 definitions regarding tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities, so as to  
3 expand the definition of "approved school"; to provide for related matters; to provide for  
4 legislative findings; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

7 WHEREAS, the General Assembly is committed to addressing the health care workforce  
8 shortage in Georgia, which includes having a sufficient number of quality nurses; and

9 WHEREAS, to increase the number of high-quality nurses in Georgia, crucial elements  
10 include providing financial assistance and removing impediments to practicing nursing.

11 **SECTION 2.**

12 Code Section 20-3-411 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to definitions  
13 regarding tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities, is amended by  
14 revising paragraph (2) as follows:

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15       "(2) 'Approved school' means:

16       (A) A nonproprietary institution of higher education located in this state which is not  
17       a branch of the university system; which is not a four-year or graduate level institution  
18       of higher education that is, or is a part of, a college or university system that is owned  
19       and operated by a state other than Georgia; which is accredited by the Southern  
20       Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a graduate level school or college of  
21       theology or divinity; and which is not presently receiving state funds under Article 4  
22       of this chapter; provided, however, that an institution which otherwise meets the  
23       requirements of this definition and of this subpart except for the lack of accreditation  
24       by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools shall be deemed to be an  
25       'approved school' during the period that the institution holds candidate for accreditation  
26       status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; provided, further, that  
27       an institution which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this  
28       subpart except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
29       Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school' if such institution was previously  
30       an 'approved school' under division ~~(iii)~~ (iv) of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph  
31       within the last five years; provided, further, that an institution which was previously  
32       accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools within the last seven  
33       years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this subpart  
34       except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
35       Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school'; and

36       (B)(i) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state  
37       which is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education; which is  
38       accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a Bible  
39       school or college (or, at the graduate level, a school or college of theology or  
40       divinity); which admits as regular students only persons who have a high school  
41       diploma, a general educational development (GED) diploma, or a degree from an

42 accredited postsecondary institution; whose students are eligible to participate in the  
43 federal Pell Grant program; which has been reviewed and approved for operation and  
44 for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic  
45 Postsecondary Education Commission; which is domiciled and incorporated in the  
46 State of Georgia; which has been in existence in the State of Georgia for at least ten  
47 years; and which met all of the requirements of this subparagraph by January 1, 2011;  
48 provided, however, that the criteria for approval for receipt of tuition equalization  
49 grant funds shall include but not be limited to areas of course study, quality of  
50 instruction, student placement rate, research and library sources, faculty, support staff,  
51 financial resources, physical plant facilities resources, and support and equipment  
52 resources.

53 (ii) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state which  
54 is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education offering a  
55 baccalaureate degree program or programs in nursing; which is accredited by the  
56 Southern Association of Colleges and Schools or by the Higher Learning  
57 Commission; which is accredited by the Commission on Collegiate Nursing  
58 Education; which has a National Council Licensure Examination four-year average  
59 passage rate of at least 85 percent; which is not a Bible school or college (or, at the  
60 graduate level, a school or college of theology or divinity); which admits as regular  
61 students only persons who have a high school diploma, a general educational  
62 development (GED) diploma, or a degree from an accredited postsecondary  
63 institution; whose students are eligible to participate in the federal Pell Grant  
64 program; which has been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of  
65 tuition equalization grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education  
66 Commission; which has a physical location in the State of Georgia; and which has  
67 been in existence in the State of Georgia for at least five years; provided, however,

68 that only the institution's baccalaureate degree program or programs in nursing shall  
69 be deemed an approved school for the purposes of this subpart.

70 ~~(ii)~~(iii) Any proprietary institution that is otherwise qualified pursuant to division (i)  
71 of this subparagraph on July 1, 1995, shall be deemed to be eligible for receipt of  
72 tuition equalization grant funds subject, however, to any subsequent review of such  
73 approval pursuant to any proper regulations which may thereafter be adopted in  
74 accordance with paragraph (10) of subsection (b) of Code Section 20-3-250.5  
75 applicable to all qualified proprietary institutions.

76 ~~(iii)~~(iv) Any proprietary institution of higher education that is otherwise qualified  
77 pursuant to division (i) of this subparagraph on January 1, 2011, shall continue to be  
78 an approved school pursuant to this paragraph as long as it continues to meet the  
79 requirements of division (i) of this subparagraph as such existed on March 14, 2011."

80

### SECTION 3.

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