

The Senate Committee on Higher Education offered the following substitute to HB 249:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 3 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,  
2 relating to industry services training program, so as to provide for certain tuition-free  
3 programs that relate to the operation of a commercial motor vehicle for veterans; to amend  
4 Subpart 2A of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
5 Annotated, relating to the needs based financial aid program, so as to provide for a definition;  
6 to provide for a maximum award amount; to provide for a maximum single payment amount;  
7 to provide for related matters; to provide for an effective date; to repeal conflicting laws; and  
8 for other purposes.

9 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

10 **SECTION 1.**

11 Article 3 of Chapter 4 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
12 industry services training program, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as  
13 follows:

14 "20-4-43.1.

15 Subject to appropriations by the General Assembly for such purposes, the training  
16 programs under this article entered into on or before June 30, 2025, by a qualified

17 participant that relate to the operation of a commercial motor vehicle shall be tuition free.  
18 For purposes of this Code section, a qualified participant shall be a veteran of the United  
19 States armed forces who was honorably discharged as evidenced by United States  
20 Department of Defense Form 214 or National Guard Bureau Form 22."

21 **SECTION 2.**

22 Subpart 2A of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia  
23 Annotated, relating to the needs based financial aid program, is amended by revising  
24 paragraph (1) of Code Section 20-3-360, relating to definitions, as follows:

25 "(1) 'Eligible student' means a person:

26 (A) Whose family income is considered economically disadvantaged, based on criteria  
27 established by the commission, or who has a financial aid gap;

28 (B) Who meets any academic or other standards established by the commission;

29 (C) Who is eligible for a scholarship or grant pursuant to Code Section 20-3-519.1;

30 (D) Who has completed the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA); and

31 (E) Who has completed:

32 (i) Seventy 80 percent of the credit requirements toward the credential of his or her  
33 program of study, if such program is a four-year program; or

34 (ii) Forty-five percent of the credit requirements toward the credential of his or her  
35 program of study, if such program is a two-year program."

36 **SECTION 3.**

37 Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-361, relating to grants,  
38 individualized eligibility criteria, and criteria for retention, as follows:

39 "20-3-361.

40 Subject to appropriations, the commission shall establish a needs based financial aid  
41 program to provide grants to eligible students for undergraduate level postsecondary

42 education at qualified institutions. The maximum award amount per eligible student shall  
43 be ~~\$2,500~~ \$3,500.00 in total, provided that no single payment for an eligible student shall  
44 exceed \$2,500.00. The commission may provide for individualized eligibility criteria and  
45 grant amounts as determined to be the most appropriate for the particular qualified  
46 institution and its student population in accordance with this subpart and the rules and  
47 regulations of the commission. The commission shall also establish criteria necessary for  
48 eligible students to retain and continue to receive such grants in accordance with this  
49 subpart."

50 **SECTION 4.**

51 This Act shall become effective upon its approval by the Governor or upon its becoming law  
52 without such approval.

53 **SECTION 5.**

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