

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 693:

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 relative to tuition equalization grants at private colleges and universities, so as to  
3 expand the definition of "approved school"; to provide for related matters; to repeal  
4 conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

5 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

6 **SECTION 1.**

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

10 "(2) 'Approved school' means:

11 (A) A nonproprietary institution of higher education located in this state which is not  
12 a branch of the university system; which is not a four-year or graduate level institution  
13 of higher education that is, or is a part of, a college or university system that is owned  
14 and operated by a state other than Georgia; which is accredited by the Southern  
15 Association of Colleges and Schools; which is not a graduate level school or college of  
16 theology or divinity; and which is not presently receiving state funds under Article 4

H. B. 693 (SUB)

17 of this chapter; provided, however, that an institution which otherwise meets the  
18 requirements of this definition and of this subpart except for the lack of accreditation  
19 by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools shall be deemed to be an  
20 'approved school' during the period that the institution holds candidate for accreditation  
21 status with the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; provided, further, that  
22 an institution which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this  
23 subpart except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
24 Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school' if such institution was previously  
25 an 'approved school' under division (iii)(iv) of subparagraph (B) of this paragraph  
26 within the last five years; provided, further, that an institution which was previously  
27 accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools within the last seven  
28 years and which otherwise meets the requirements of this definition and of this subpart  
29 except for the lack of accreditation by the Southern Association of Colleges and  
30 Schools shall be deemed to be an 'approved school'; and

31 (B)(i) A qualified proprietary institution of higher education located in this state  
32 which is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution of higher education; which is  
33 accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on  
34 Colleges as a Level VI institution; which is not a Bible school or college (or, at the  
35 graduate level, a school or college of theology or divinity); which admits as regular  
36 students only persons who have a high school diploma, a state approved high school  
37 equivalency (HSE) diploma, or a degree from an accredited postsecondary institution;  
38 whose students are eligible to participate in the federal Pell Grant program; which has  
39 been reviewed and approved for operation and for receipt of tuition equalization grant  
40 funds by the Georgia Nonpublic Postsecondary Education Commission; which is  
41 domiciled and incorporated in the State of Georgia; which has been located in this  
42 state since on or before January 1, ~~2021~~ 2015; and which met all of the requirements  
43 of this subparagraph by January 1, ~~2021~~ 2015; provided, however, that the criteria for

44 approval for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds shall include but not be limited  
45 to areas of course study; quality of academic instruction; student placement rate;  
46 research and library resources; faculty; support staff; financial resources; instructional  
47 campuses, facilities, or other physical sites; and support and equipment resources.

48 (ii) A qualified nonproprietary institution of higher education located in this state  
49 which is a baccalaureate degree-granting institution offering a baccalaureate degree  
50 program or programs in nursing; which is accredited by the Southern Association of  
51 Colleges and Schools or by the Higher Learning Commission; which is accredited by  
52 the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education; which has a National Council  
53 Licensure Examination four-year average passage rate of at least 80 percent; which  
54 is not a Bible school or college (or, at the graduate level, a school or college of  
55 theology or divinity); which admits as regular students only persons who have a high  
56 school diploma, a state approved high school equivalency (HSE) diploma, or a degree  
57 from an accredited postsecondary institution; whose students are eligible to participate  
58 in the federal Pell Grant program; which has been reviewed and approved for  
59 operation and for receipt of tuition equalization grant funds by the Georgia Nonpublic  
60 Postsecondary Education Commission; which has at least one instructional campus  
61 that has been physically located in the State of Georgia for at least ten years, as of  
62 June 30, 2025; provided, however, that only such institution's baccalaureate degree  
63 program or programs in nursing shall be deemed an approved school for the purposes  
64 of this subpart; and provided, further, that, notwithstanding any provision to the  
65 contrary in Code Section 20-2-161.3 or subparagraph (D) of paragraph (7) of Code  
66 Section 20-3-519, an institution or program that is deemed an approved school  
67 pursuant to this division shall not be deemed an eligible postsecondary institution, as  
68 defined in Code Section 20-3-519, or for purposes of the Dual Enrollment Act, as  
69 provided for in Code Section 20-2-161.3, or for any other scholarship, loan, or grant  
70 program provided for in this article, including HOPE scholarships and grants.

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

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

81 **SECTION 2.**

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