

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 56:

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 tuition grants to spouses of law enforcement officers,
4 firefighters, and prison guards who were killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty;
5 to revise legislative findings; to provide for definitions; to provide for eligibility; to revise
6 maximum grant award amounts; to provide for conforming changes; to provide for related
7 matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Subpart 7 of Part 3 of Article 7 of Chapter 3 of Title 20 of the Official Code of Georgia
11 Annotated, relating to grants to children of law enforcement officers, firefighters, and prison
12 guards, is amended by revising Code Section 20-3-450, relating to legislative findings and
13 purpose of subpart, as follows:

14 "20-3-450.

15 The General Assembly finds that certain citizens are called upon to enforce the criminal
16 laws of this state and to protect persons and properties within the state and that they

H. B. 56 (SUB)

- 1 -

17 provide a valuable and vital public service to the state and to citizens and properties within
18 the state at a great personal sacrifice and risk to their own lives and well-being. The
19 purpose of the General Assembly, as provided for in this subpart, is to enable the authority
20 to provide educational grant assistance to the children and spouses of such persons who are
21 killed or permanently disabled in the line of duty."

22 SECTION 2.

23 Said subpart is further amended in Code Section 20-3-451, relating to definitions, by revising
24 paragraphs (1) and (3) and by adding new paragraphs to read as follows:

25 "(1) 'Academic year' means a period of time, typically nine months, in which a full-time
26 student is expected to complete the equivalent of at least ~~two semesters' or three quarters'~~
27 ~~academic work~~ nine or more credit hours per term or semester or in which a part-time
28 student is expected to complete the equivalent of eight or less credit hours per term or
29 semester."

30 "(2.1) 'Eligible student' means a person who qualifies for an educational grant under this
31 subpart.

32 (3) 'Firefighter' means a person employed, appointed, or regularly enrolled by the state
33 or by any county or municipal fire department whose duties include extinguishing fires
34 or investigating cases of suspected arson.

35 (3.1) 'In the line of duty' means:

36 (A) With respect to a firefighter, when responding to or returning from a fire or other
37 emergency, performing duties during any fire or other emergency, or performing duties
38 intended to protect life and property, including, without limitation, actual participation
39 in a training exercise;

40 (B) With respect to a law enforcement officer, when performing services for the law
41 enforcement agency which employs such officer, responding to any situation which

42 would save a life or preserve the peace, or preventing or attempting to prevent the
43 commission of a crime; or
44 (C) With respect to a prison guard, when performing services for and receiving
45 compensation from the public agency which employs such prison guard."

46 SECTION 3.

47 Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-452, relating to amount of
48 grants to each eligible student, as follows:

49 "20-3-452.

50 There is granted to each eligible student attending an approved school the sum of ~~\$2,000.00~~
51 no more than \$18,000.00 per academic year. No person shall be eligible to receive grant
52 assistance provided under this subpart in excess of ~~\$8,000.00~~ \$72,000.00. Grant assistance
53 to eligible students under this subpart shall be payable during the period of a summer
54 school quarter or semester. The payment of grants to eligible students under this subpart
55 shall be contingent upon the appropriation of funds by the General Assembly for the
56 purposes of this subpart in annual appropriations Acts of the General Assembly."

57 SECTION 4.

58 Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-453, relating to eligibility of
59 students, as follows:

60 "20-3-453.

61 No grants shall be payable to any person under this subpart who fails to meet any of the
62 following qualifications or restrictions:

63 (1) Such person ~~must~~ shall be the child, either natural or adopted, or the spouse of a law
64 enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard who has been permanently disabled or
65 killed in the line of duty or while performing the duties to which he or she was assigned
66 ~~in the normal course of employment~~. If such person is the adopted child of any such law

67 enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard, such person ~~must~~ shall have been
68 adopted and any final order of adoption issued prior to the date of the accident or event
69 causing the death or permanent disability of such parent;

70 (2) Such person ~~must~~ shall have been a citizen of this state for a period of at least 12
71 months immediately prior to the date of registration in an approved school and ~~must~~ shall
72 remain a citizen of ~~the~~ this state while receiving funds under this subpart;

73 (3) The ~~deceased or disabled law enforcement officer, firefighter, or prison guard~~ parent
74 ~~or spouse~~ of such person ~~must~~ shall have been ~~an employee, either full-time or part-time,~~
75 ~~or an officer or official, whether elected or appointed, of~~ employed, appointed, or
76 regularly enrolled by this state or any county, municipality, department, board, bureau,
77 branch, agency, commission, authority, or political subdivision of the state on the date
78 of the accident or event from which death or permanent disability resulted; and

79 (4) Any person otherwise meeting the conditions of this subpart shall be eligible to
80 receive a grant even though the accident or the event causing the death or disability of
81 such person's parent or spouse occurred prior to July 1, ~~1980~~ 2025."

82 SECTION 5.

83 Said subpart is further amended by revising Code Section 20-3-455, relating to
84 administration of program and physical examinations, as follows:

85 "20-3-455.

86 The authority is authorized to prescribe such rules and regulations as may be necessary or
87 convenient for administration of this program and to establish procedures for determination
88 of eligibility of applicants. The authority is also authorized to establish standards and
89 procedures for verifying the death or permanent disability of the applicant's parent or
90 spouse and for such purpose is authorized to require a physical examination and to pay for
91 the cost of such examination from funds appropriated for use by the authority for the
92 purposes of this subpart."

93

SECTION 6.

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