

The House Committee on Higher Education offers the following substitute to HB 385:

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED  
AN ACT

1 To amend Code Section 20-3-519.2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to  
2 eligibility requirements for a HOPE scholarship and award amount, so as to allow  
3 academically successful students who are concurrently seeking a baccalaureate degree and  
4 a first professional degree to use the full number of hours of HOPE scholarship eligibility;  
5 to allow academically successful students who commence a graduate program at an eligible  
6 postsecondary institution within 18 months of earning a baccalaureate degree to use the full  
7 number of hours of HOPE scholarship eligibility; to provide for exceptions based on  
8 previous participation in the dual enrollment program; to provide for an effective date and  
9 applicability; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for other  
10 purposes.

11 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

12 **SECTION 1.**

13 Code Section 20-3-519.2 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to eligibility  
14 requirements for a HOPE scholarship and award amount, is amended by revising  
15 subsection (d) as follows:

16 "(d) A student may receive the HOPE scholarship until the first of these events:

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17 (1)(A) Except as provided in subparagraph (B) of this paragraph, the The student has  
18 earned a baccalaureate or first professional degree;.

19 (B)(i) Subject to division (ii) of this subparagraph, the provisions of subparagraph  
20 (A) of this paragraph shall not apply to any student:

21 (I) Who continuously meets the achievement standards provided for in this Code  
22 section while concurrently seeking both a baccalaureate degree and a first  
23 professional degree; or

24 (II) Who continuously met the achievement standards provided for in this Code  
25 section while earning a baccalaureate degree and who, within 18 months of earning  
26 such degree, commences a graduate program at an eligible postsecondary  
27 institution, provided that he or she continuously meets such achievement standards.

28 (ii) Notwithstanding any provision of Code Section 20-2-161.3 to the contrary, the  
29 number of hours for which a student is eligible to receive the HOPE scholarship for  
30 a first professional degree under division (i) of this subparagraph shall be reduced by  
31 the number of hours for which such student received credit for completing one or  
32 more postsecondary courses while participating in the dual enrollment program  
33 provided for in Code Section 20-2-161.3 if the cost of such postsecondary courses  
34 was paid for using state funds pursuant to such program;

35 (2) The student has attempted at any postsecondary institution a total of 190 quarter  
36 hours or 127 semester hours; or

37 (3) For those students receiving a HOPE scholarship for the first time between July 1,  
38 2011, and June 30, 2019, seven years from a student's graduation from high school or the  
39 equivalent thereof as determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in its rules  
40 and regulations; provided, however, that, for a student who serves in the military during  
41 such seven-year period, any such active duty military service shall not count against the  
42 seven-year period nor constitute a failure to be enrolled. For those students receiving a  
43 HOPE scholarship for the first time on or after July 1, 2019, ten years from a student's

44 graduation from high school or the equivalent thereof as determined by the Georgia  
45 Student Finance Commission in its rules and regulations; provided, however, that, for a  
46 student who serves in the military during such ten-year period, any such active duty  
47 military service shall not count against the ten-year period nor constitute a failure to be  
48 enrolled. Any full-time or part-time student receiving a HOPE scholarship and enrolled  
49 in an eligible postsecondary institution after June 30, 2019, shall remain eligible for a  
50 HOPE scholarship pursuant to this paragraph, provided that such student meets all other  
51 eligibility requirements, including, but not limited to, those set forth in paragraphs (1)  
52 and (2) of this subsection. Students with a disability, as defined in the federal Americans  
53 with Disabilities Act, 42 U.S.C. Section 12102, which prevents or substantially inhibits  
54 full-time academic study, may apply to the Georgia Student Finance Commission for a  
55 limited waiver from the applicable year limit set forth in this paragraph and request  
56 additional time to complete the first to occur of the events set forth in paragraphs (1)  
57 and (2) of this subsection. Such application for a limited waiver shall be considered and  
58 determined by the Georgia Student Finance Commission in accordance with its rules and  
59 regulations."

60 **SECTION 2.**

61 This Act shall become effective on July 1, 2025, and shall apply beginning with the  
62 2026-2027 academic year.

63 **SECTION 3.**

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