

House Bill 385 (COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE)

By: Representatives Holcomb of the 101st and Barrett of the 24th

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) and
52 (2) of this subsection. Students with a disability, as defined in the federal Americans with
53 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) and
57 (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, 2026, and shall apply beginning with the
62 2027-2028 academic year.

63 **SECTION 3.**

64 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.