

By: Senator(s) Hall

To: Universities and
Colleges;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2038

1 AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A PART-TIME STUDENT TUITION ASSISTANCE
2 GRANT PROGRAM FOR FIRST-TIME PART-TIME STUDENTS AT PUBLIC AND
3 PRIVATE TWO-YEAR AND FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN
4 MISSISSIPPI TO BE ADMINISTERED BY THE MISSISSIPPI POSTSECONDARY
5 EDUCATION FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE BOARD; TO ESTABLISH GRANT AWARDS
6 AND ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS UNDER THE PROGRAM AND PENALTIES FOR
7 FRAUDULENT RECEIPT OF GRANT AWARDS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

9 SECTION 1. (1) There is established the Part-time Student
10 Tuition Assistance Grant Program for part-time college or
11 university freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors to be
12 administered by the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
13 Assistance Board established under Section 37-106-9, Mississippi
14 Code of 1972, which shall set the dates and deadlines for applying
15 for an award under this section. The board shall establish such
16 rules and regulations as it deems necessary and proper to carry
17 out the purposes and intent of this act.

18 (2) The college or university shall approve grants to
19 part-time freshmen, sophomore, junior and senior Mississippi
20 residents who meet the general requirements for student
21 eligibility as provided in subsection (4) of this section.

22 (3) The award shall be applied to tuition, rooms and meals,
23 books, materials and fees not to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars
24 (\$250.00) per semester for students attending state institutions
25 of higher learning in Mississippi, four-year regionally
26 accredited, state-approved, nonprofit colleges and universities in
27 Mississippi, public community or junior colleges in Mississippi,
28 or regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit two-year or

29 four-year colleges in Mississippi, with an aggregate limit of One
30 Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00) per student.

31 (4) The general requirements for initial eligibility of
32 students for Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grants consist
33 of the following:

34 (a) First-time acceptance for part-time enrollment at
35 any state institution of higher learning or public community or
36 junior college located in Mississippi, or any regionally
37 accredited, state-approved, nonprofit four- or two-year college or
38 university located in Mississippi as listed in paragraph (d) of
39 this subsection (4);

40 (b) Application is for fall or spring semester and not
41 a summer session;

42 (c) Recipient must be able to demonstrate that courses
43 taken will apply toward a first associate or first baccalaureate
44 degree for purposes of job or workplace advancement;

45 (d) Must attend one (1) of the following institutions
46 of higher learning: Alcorn State University, Delta State
47 University, Jackson State University, Mississippi State
48 University, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi Valley
49 State University, University of Mississippi, University of
50 Southern Mississippi, Coahoma Community College, Copiah-Lincoln
51 Community College, East Central Community College, East
52 Mississippi Community College, Hinds Community College, Holmes
53 Community College, Itawamba Community College, Jones County Junior
54 College, Meridian Community College, Mississippi Delta Community
55 College, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Northeast
56 Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community
57 College, Pearl River Community College, Southwest Mississippi
58 Community College, Belhaven College, Blue Mountain College,
59 Millsaps College, Mississippi College, Rust College, Tougaloo
60 College, William Carey College, Mary Holmes College, Magnolia
61 Bible College and Wood College.

62 (5) By accepting a Part-time Student Tuition Assistance
63 Grant, the student is attesting to the accuracy, completeness and
64 correctness of information provided to demonstrate the student's
65 eligibility. Falsification of such information shall result in

66 the denial of any pending grant and revocation of any award
67 currently held to the extent that no further payments shall be
68 made. Any student knowingly making false statements in order to
69 receive a grant shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable, upon
70 conviction thereof, by a fine of up to Ten Thousand Dollars
71 (\$10,000.00), a prison sentence of up to one (1) year in the
72 county jail, or both, and shall be required to return all
73 Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grants wrongfully obtained.

74 (6) Eligibility for renewal of Part-time Student Tuition
75 Assistance Grants shall be evaluated at the end of each semester,
76 or term, of each academic year. As a condition for renewal, a
77 student shall:

78 (a) Make steady academic progress toward a certificate
79 or degree, as outlined in the school Satisfactory Academic
80 Progress Standards and certified by the institution's registrar.

81 (b) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least
82 3.0 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of the first semester,
83 and thereafter maintain such a cumulative grade point average as
84 calculated at the end of each semester.

85 (7) Each student, each year, must complete a Free
86 Application for Federal Student Aid form or a Statement of
87 Certification as designed by the administering board to determine
88 his/her eligibility for a Part-time Student Tuition Assistance
89 Grant.

90 (8) (a) The amount of the Part-time Student Tuition
91 Assistance Grant awarded to any one (1) student, up to the maximum
92 amount provided in subsection (3) of this section, shall be the
93 difference of the student's cost of attendance at his accredited
94 college of choice and the amount of federal aid such student may
95 receive, not to supplant but to supplement the amount of any
96 federal aid awarded to the student. Cost of attendance is the
97 tuition and fees of the applicable institution plus an allowance
98 for room and meals and books and materials.

99 (b) Payment of the Part-time Student Tuition Assistance
100 Grant shall be made payable to the recipient and the educational
101 institution and mailed directly to the institution, to be applied
102 first to tuition.

103 (9) In order for an institution to remain eligible for its
104 students to participate in the Part-time Student Tuition
105 Assistance Grant Program, the institution shall comply with the
106 following requirements:

107 (a) A complete and accurate roster of the eligibility
108 status of each awarded student shall be made to the board for each
109 term, semester or quarter of the academic year the student
110 receives a Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grant.

111 (b) The institution is required to make refunds to the
112 Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grant Fund for any funds
113 which have not been disbursed to the recipient, in the case of
114 students who have received a grant but who terminate enrollment
115 during the academic term, semester or quarter of the academic year
116 if an institution's refund policies permit a student to receive a
117 refund in such instance. The recipient shall be responsible for
118 the refund of any funds which have been disbursed by the
119 institution in such instance.

120 (c) The board may conduct its own annual audits of any
121 institution participating in the Part-time Student Tuition
122 Assistance Grant Program. The board may suspend or revoke an
123 institution's eligibility to receive future monies under the
124 program if it finds that the institution has not complied with the
125 provisions of this act.

126 (10) No student may receive a Part-time Student Tuition
127 Assistance Grant for more than the equivalent semesters or
128 quarters required to complete one (1) degree or certificate
129 program per institution.

130 (11) Subject to the availability of funds specifically
131 appropriated therefor, it is the intent of the Legislature to

132 fully fund grant awards to eligible students as follows: Program
133 funding level shall be capped at one thousand (1,000) students in
134 Fiscal Year 2000 with an additional one thousand (1,000) students
135 added each fiscal year until four thousand (4,000) students are
136 enrolled in the program. If funds are insufficient to fully fund
137 grant awards to eligible students, grant awards shall be prorated
138 among all eligible students. No student shall receive any
139 combination of student financial aid in excess of the cost of
140 attendance as defined in subsection (8)(a).

141 SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from
142 and after July 1, 1999.