

By: Senator(s) Hall

To: Universities and
Colleges;
Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2038
(As Passed the Senate)

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, books, materials
23 and fees not to exceed Two Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$250.00) per

24 semester for students attending state institutions of higher
25 learning in Mississippi, four-year regionally accredited,
26 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. Assistance payments
31 shall be prorated based upon the number of credit hours in which
32 the student is enrolled, to be determined by regulations
33 established by the board.

34 (4) The general requirements for initial eligibility of
35 students for Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grants consist
36 of the following:

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

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

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

48 (d) Must attend one (1) of the following institutions
49 of higher learning: Alcorn State University, Delta State
50 University, Jackson State University, Mississippi State
51 University, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi Valley
52 State University, University of Mississippi, University of
53 Southern Mississippi, Coahoma Community College, Copiah-Lincoln
54 Community College, East Central Community College, East

55 Mississippi Community College, Hinds Community College, Holmes
56 Community College, Itawamba Community College, Jones County Junior
57 College, Meridian Community College, Mississippi Delta Community
58 College, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Northeast
59 Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community
60 College, Pearl River Community College, Southwest Mississippi
61 Community College, Belhaven College, Blue Mountain College,
62 Millsaps College, Mississippi College, Rust College, Tougaloo
63 College, William Carey College, Mary Holmes College, Magnolia
64 Bible College and Wood College.

65 (5) By accepting a Part-time Student Tuition Assistance
66 Grant, the student is attesting to the accuracy, completeness and
67 correctness of information provided to demonstrate the student's
68 eligibility. Falsification of such information shall result in
69 the denial of any pending grant and revocation of any award
70 currently held to the extent that no further payments shall be
71 made. Any student knowingly making false statements in order to
72 receive a grant shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable, upon
73 conviction thereof, by a fine of up to Ten Thousand Dollars
74 (\$10,000.00), a prison sentence of up to one (1) year in the
75 county jail, or both, and shall be required to return all
76 Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grants wrongfully obtained.

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

81 (a) Make steady academic progress toward a certificate
82 or degree, as outlined in the school Satisfactory Academic

83 Progress Standards and certified by the institution's registrar.

84 (b) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least
85 3.0 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of the first semester,
86 and thereafter maintain such a cumulative grade point average as
87 calculated at the end of each semester.

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

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

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

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

110 (a) A complete and accurate roster of the eligibility

111 status of each awarded student shall be made to the board for each
112 term, semester or quarter of the academic year the student
113 receives a Part-time Student Tuition Assistance Grant.

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

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

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

133 (11) Subject to the availability of funds specifically
134 appropriated therefor, it is the intent of the Legislature to
135 fully fund grant awards to eligible students as follows: Program
136 funding level shall be capped at one thousand (1,000) students in
137 Fiscal Year 2000 with an additional one thousand (1,000) students
138 added each fiscal year until four thousand (4,000) students are

139 enrolled in the program. If funds are insufficient to fully fund
140 grant awards to eligible students, grant awards shall be prorated
141 among all eligible students. No student shall receive any
142 combination of student financial aid in excess of the cost of
143 attendance as defined in subsection (8)(a).

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