

By: Senator(s) Harden

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2936

1 AN ACT TO ASSIST ELIGIBLE STUDENTS TO TRANSFER FROM TWO-YEAR
2 PUBLIC COLLEGES TO FOUR-YEAR PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES; TO PROVIDE
3 ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS AND CONDITIONS; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

5 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is created the Mississippi
6 Community/Junior College Transfer Scholarship Fund. The purpose
7 of this fund is to assist eligible students to transfer from a
8 two-year Mississippi public community or junior college to a
9 public four-year Mississippi public institution of higher
10 learning. The fund shall consist of all monies appropriated to
11 the fund by the Legislature and any gifts, grants or donations
12 that may be received from any source, public or private. Monies
13 in the fund may be used solely for the purpose of awarding
14 scholarships under this section. Interest earned on the
15 investment of monies in the fund must be returned and deposited to
16 the credit of the fund.

17 (2) This subsection addresses eligibility requirements for
18 those students who are transferring from a two-year Mississippi
19 public community or junior college to a four-year Mississippi
20 public institution of higher learning. When making initial
21 application for the scholarship, the students must meet the
22 following requirements:

23 (a) Be a United States citizen or eligible noncitizen
24 and registered with the Selective Service, if required.

25 (b) Have actually resided in Mississippi during the
26 twelve (12) months preceding enrollment at any four-year
27 Mississippi public institution of higher learning.

28 (c) Have a custodial parent or guardian who is a
29 resident of Mississippi (if considered a dependent).

30 (d) Have no criminal record.

31 (e) Must not have previously attended a four-year
32 institution of higher learning.

33 (f) Must have earned at a minimum sixty (60)
34 transferable hours from a Mississippi public community/junior
35 college with a minimum cumulative grade point average of 3.00
36 calculated on a 4.0 scale.

37 (g) Be enrolling or accepted for enrollment as a
38 full-time undergraduate student at an eligible four-year
39 Mississippi public institution of higher learning pursuing a first
40 baccalaureate degree.

41 (h) File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
42 (FAFSA).

43 (i) Be Pell eligible.

44 (j) Be in compliance with the terms of both federal and
45 state-aid programs.

46 (k) Total award package will not exceed the
47 institution's cost of attendance or some other limitation
48 established by the institution which may be less than the cost of
49 attendance when the scholarship is added to the award package. If
50 an over award occurs, the scholarship will be reduced.

51 (l) Be in compliance with the terms of both federal and
52 state-aid programs.

53 (3) To maintain continued eligibility for the scholarship
54 once enrolled in college, a student must meet all of the following
55 requirements:

56 (a) Make academic progress toward a degree, earning not
57 less than the minimum number of hours of credit required for
58 full-time standing each semester or trimester requiring such
59 enrollment.

60 (b) Maintain continuous enrollment at the same
61 four-year Mississippi public institution of higher learning as a
62 full-time undergraduate student (excluding summer sessions) for
63 not less than two (2) semesters in each successive academic year,
64 unless granted an approval for transfer of award or in the case of
65 withdrawal from school, granted an exception for cause by the
66 Mississippi Office of State Student Financial Aid.

67 (c) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least
68 3.00 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of each academic year.

69 (d) Have no criminal record, except for misdemeanor
70 traffic violations.

71 (e) File the Free Application for Federal Student Aid
72 (FAFSA) annually.

73 (f) Be Pell eligible.

74 (g) Continue to maintain Mississippi residency.

75 (h) Be in compliance with the terms of federal and
76 other state-aid programs.

77 (4) Failure to maintain academic eligibility and/or
78 full-time enrollment (other than withdrawal) will result in
79 permanent cancellation of the recipient's eligibility for the
80 scholarship. Withdrawal from school will result in cancellation
81 of the recipient's eligibility for the scholarship; however, the
82 student may file an appeal for reconsideration with the
83 Mississippi Office of State Student Financial Aid and may be
84 granted an exception for cause.

85 (5) All applicants for funding are notified whether eligible
86 or not. If an applicant must provide additional information,
87 he/she should respond in writing by the specified deadline.

88 (6) Universities and community/junior colleges will report
89 certain data about applicants/recipients, including, but not
90 limited to:

91 (a) Confirmation that award recipients are enrolled
92 full time each semester.

93 (b) Confirmation of the continuing eligibility of award
94 recipients at the completion of each academic year (ending after
95 each spring semester or trimester), including the following:

96 (i) Total number of hours earned during the
97 specific academic year (excluding summer).

98 (ii) Cumulative grade point average.

99 (iii) Notify the Office of State Student Financial
100 Aid if an award recipient fails to enroll or subsequently
101 withdraws.

102 (3) To prevent the student's total financial assistance
103 awards from exceeding the institution's cost of attendance or some
104 other limitation established by the institution which may be less
105 than the cost of attendance, the institution may reduce the amount
106 paid by the scholarship and refund the amount to the Mississippi
107 Office of Student Financial Aid.

108 (7) The maximum annual award that may be made under the
109 scholarship program shall be Three Thousand Dollars (\$3,000.00).
110 Students classified as juniors may receive a maximum of two (2)
111 annual awards or, in those instances when a degree program
112 requires five (5) years for completion, three (3) annual awards.

113 (8) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher
114 Learning shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry
115 out the purposes and intent of this section. The Board of
116 Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall be the
117 administering agency of the program.

118 (9) It is the intent of the Legislature to fully fund
119 scholarships to eligible students under this program. If funds
120 are insufficient to fully fund scholarships to all eligible
121 applicants, the board shall award the scholarships to students
122 working toward their first degree on a first-come, first-served
123 basis; however, priority consideration must be given to persons
124 previously receiving scholarships under the program who are making

125 steady academic progress toward completion of a baccalaureate
126 degree.

127 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
128 and after July 1, 2007.