

By: Representative Henley

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 966

1 AN ACT TO PROVIDE FOR THE WAIVER OF TUITION, REQUIRED FEES
2 AND HOUSING COSTS AT THE STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND
3 COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES FOR THE CHILDREN OF MISSISSIPPI
4 SERVICE MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES ARMED FORCES WHO WERE KILLED
5 IN THE LINE OF DUTY OR DIED AS THE IMMEDIATE RESULT OF A
6 SERVICE-CONNECTED DISABILITY AS DETERMINED BY THE UNITED STATES
7 DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS; TO REQUIRE APPLICATIONS FOR A
8 WAIVER TO INCLUDE DOCUMENTATION CONCERNING THE DECEASED VETERAN'S
9 DEATH; TO PROVIDE THAT TUITION MAY BE WAIVED FOR BOTH FULL-TIME
10 AND PART-TIME STUDENTS; TO PROVIDE THAT THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF
11 STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING SHALL BE THE ADMINISTERING
12 AGENCY OF THE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

14 **SECTION 1.** (1) For the purposes of this section, the term
15 "child" means a natural child, legally adopted child or stepchild.

16 (2) Beginning with the 2019-2020 academic year, any resident
17 of the State of Mississippi who is the child of a Mississippi
18 service member of the United States Armed Forces who was killed in
19 the line of duty or died as the immediate result of a
20 service-connected disability as determined by the United States
21 Department of Veterans Affairs, and who is enrolled in or accepted
22 for enrollment at a state institution of higher learning or a
23 public community or junior college in Mississippi, may apply for a



24 waiver of tuition at the institution or college. In order to be
25 eligible for a tuition waiver, a child must not have reached
26 twenty-three (23) years of age on the first day of the quarter,
27 semester, trimester or term for which the child is enrolling;
28 however, any child who has begun earning academic credit in
29 furtherance of an associate or baccalaureate degree or certificate
30 program before attaining twenty-three (23) years of age whose
31 college instruction is interrupted for any reason is eligible to
32 receive academic waivers in furtherance of the degree or
33 certificate toward which the student is working, subject to the
34 conditions prescribed in subsection (3) of this section. An
35 application must be accompanied by proper proof that the deceased
36 service member is a Mississippi citizen and a member of the United
37 States Armed Forces and that was killed in the line of duty or
38 died as an immediate result of a service-connected disability as
39 determined by the United States Department of Veterans Affairs.

40 (3) A waiver of tuition awarded under this section may not
41 exceed the actual cost of tuition at the institution or college at
42 which the child of a deceased veteran is enrolled or accepted for
43 enrollment and may be reduced by an amount to ensure the value of
44 the waiver, combined with any other grants, scholarships and
45 benefits received by the student, does not exceed the actual cost
46 of tuition. For purposes of this section, the term "tuition"
47 means the quarter, semester, trimester or term charges, all
48 required fees and housing costs; however, the term "tuition" does



not include books, food, school supplies, materials, dues or fees for extracurricular activities. Both full-time and part-time students may apply for a waiver under this section. Students enrolling on a full-time basis may receive a maximum of four (4) annual waivers, and in those instances when a degree program requires five (5) years for completion, five (5) annual waivers. The number of waivers that may be granted to a student attending school on a part-time basis may not exceed the length of time required to complete the associate or baccalaureate degree or certificate program toward which the student is working. A person who has a baccalaureate degree is not eligible for a waiver of tuition under this section, and any person who has an associate degree may receive waivers only in furtherance of a baccalaureate degree.

(4) As a condition for renewal of a waiver of tuition, a student must make steady academic progress toward a certificate or associate or baccalaureate degree, as certified by the institution's registrar, and must maintain a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.00 calculated on a 4.00 scale at the end of each term.

(5) The Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning and the Mississippi Community College Board jointly shall promulgate rules and regulations necessary to carry out the purposes of this section. The Board of Trustees of State



73 Institutions of Higher Learning is the administering agency of the
74 tuition waiver program.

75 (6) It is the intent of the Legislature that all children of
76 deceased veterans who are eligible for a waiver of tuition under
77 this section be granted a waiver. If funding at a state
78 institution or community or junior college is insufficient to
79 provide a waiver of tuition for all eligible applicants at that
80 institution or college, the board shall grant the tuition waivers
81 to first-time students on a first-come, first-served basis;
82 however, priority consideration must be given to persons
83 previously receiving waivers under this section who are making
84 steady academic progress toward completion of a certificate
85 program or associate or baccalaureate degree.

86 (7) The Legislature shall appropriate all funds necessary to
87 carry out the provisions of this act.

88 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
89 and after July 1, 2019.

