

By: Representative Scott

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

HOUSE BILL NO. 1448

1 AN ACT TO REQUIRE COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR COLLEGES TO WAIVE ALL
 2 TUITION AND FEES FOR STUDENTS GRADUATING FROM A MISSISSIPPI HIGH
 3 SCHOOL; TO ESTABLISH REQUIREMENTS FOR INITIAL ELIGIBILITY AND
 4 RENEWAL OF WAIVERS; TO DEFINE THE TERM "TUITION"; TO REQUIRE THE
 5 MISSISSIPPI COMMUNITY COLLEGE BOARD TO PROMULGATE RULES AND
 6 REGULATIONS FOR THE TUITION WAIVER PROGRAM; TO CREATE NEW SECTION
 7 37-29-307, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972, TO REQUIRE FUNDS SUFFICIENT
 8 TO COVER THE COST OF WAIVING THE TUITION FOR PARTICIPATING
 9 STUDENTS TO BE APPROPRIATED BY LINE ITEM IN THE COMMUNITY AND
 10 JUNIOR COLLEGES GENERAL SUPPORT BILL; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

12 **SECTION 1.** (1) Beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year,
 13 each public community and junior college in the state shall waive
 14 tuition for each qualified student who graduates from a
 15 Mississippi high school.

16 (2) In order to qualify for a waiver of tuition under this
 17 section, a student must:

- 18 (a) Be a resident of the State of Mississippi;
- 19 (b) Have graduated from a public or private high school
 20 or a home instruction program no more than two (2) years before
 21 seeking a waiver of tuition;



22 (c) Be enrolling in college for the first time;
23 however, courses taken through a dual enrollment or dual credit
24 program at a community or junior college or institution of higher
25 learning while a student was enrolled in high school do not
26 disqualify the student from eligibility for a waiver of tuition;
27 and

28 (d) Have met the college's general eligibility
29 requirements and been accepted for enrollment at the community or
30 junior college.

31 (3) A waiver of tuition under this section may not exceed
32 the actual cost of attendance at the community or junior college
33 at which a student is enrolled or accepted for enrollment. If a
34 student receives other grants, scholarships or tuition assistance,
35 the community or junior college must reduce the amount of the
36 waiver by such amount as may be necessary to ensure that the
37 waiver, when combined with other forms of assistance, does not
38 exceed the actual cost of tuition. For purposes of this section,
39 the term "tuition" means the semester or term charges, all
40 required fees, on-campus housing and meal-plan costs, and costs
41 for books and materials required for classes; however, the term
42 "tuition" does not include the cost of school supplies and dues or
43 fees for extracurricular activities.

44 (4) Both full-time and part-time students are eligible for a
45 tuition waiver under this section. A waiver granted to a
46 full-time student may not exceed the lesser of two (2) years or



47 the actual time required to complete the associate degree or
48 certificate program in which the student is enrolled. A waiver
49 granted to a part-time student may not exceed the length of time
50 required to complete the associate degree or certificate program
51 in which the student is enrolled.

52 (5) As a condition for renewal of a waiver of tuition, a
53 student must make steady academic progress toward an associate
54 degree or certification, as certified by the college's registrar.

55 (6) The Mississippi Community College Board shall promulgate
56 rules and regulations necessary to carry out the provisions of
57 this section.

58 (7) It is the intent of the Legislature that all students
59 eligible for a waiver of tuition under this section be granted a
60 waiver. If funding at a community or junior college is
61 insufficient to waive the tuition for all eligible applicants at
62 that college, the tuition must be waived for first-time students
63 on a first-come, first-served basis; however, priority
64 consideration must be given to students previously receiving
65 waivers under this section who are making steady academic progress
66 toward completion of an associate degree or certificate program.

67 **SECTION 2.** The following shall be codified as Section
68 37-29-307, Mississippi Code of 1972:

69 37-29-307. (1) Beginning with the appropriation for the
70 2023-2024 fiscal year, in addition to all other funding provided
71 for the support of the community and junior colleges, the



72 Legislature shall appropriate annually, by line item specifically
73 for such purpose in the community and junior colleges general
74 support bill, sufficient funding to defray the amount of funding
75 lost by each community or junior college due to the granting of
76 tuition waivers to eligible students, as required under Section 1
77 of this act.

78 (2) In calculating the state funding to be appropriated
79 under subsection (1) for the fiscal year 2023-2024, the most
80 current data reflecting the number of students enrolled in the
81 community and junior colleges who would have been eligible for a
82 tuition waiver in the 2022-2023 fiscal year, plus the actual cost
83 that would have been incurred by each community or junior college
84 in the 2022-2023 fiscal year if the college had granted waivers to
85 those students, must be utilized to project the necessary funding.
86 In subsequent fiscal years, the most current data reflecting the
87 number of students who have been granted tuition waivers and the
88 actual cost incurred by the community and junior colleges in
89 providing tuition waivers to those students must be utilized to
90 project the necessary funding for the succeeding fiscal year.
91 During the fiscal year for which funds have been appropriated, the
92 projections used for appropriation purposes must be reconciled
93 with actual enrollment and actual costs, and any necessary
94 adjustments must be made in the allocations to the community and
95 junior colleges during that year of operation.



96 **SECTION 3.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
97 and after July 1, 2023.

