

By: Representatives Gibbs (72nd), Holloway
(76th), Nelson, Bell (65th), Butler-
Washinton, James-Jones

To: Universities and
Colleges

HOUSE BILL NO. 1058

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-29, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO INCREASE THE MAXIMUM ANNUAL AWARDS UNDER THE MISSISSIPPI
3 RESIDENT TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM; AND FOR RELATED
4 PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-106-29, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-106-29. (1) There is established the Mississippi
9 Resident Tuition Assistance Grant Program for college or
10 university freshmen, sophomores, juniors and seniors, to be
11 administered by the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
12 Assistance Board established under Section 37-106-9, * * *which
13 shall set the dates and deadlines for applying for an award under
14 this section. The board shall establish such rules and
15 regulations as it deems necessary and proper to carry out the
16 purposes and intent of this section.

17 (2) The board shall approve grants to full-time freshmen,
18 sophomore, junior and senior Mississippi residents who meet the



19 general requirements for student eligibility as provided in
20 subsection (4) of this section.

21 (3) Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grants shall be
22 for Mississippi resident students from any Mississippi family
23 whose prior year adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds the maximum
24 allowed to qualify for full Pell Grant eligibility and
25 campus-based federal aid. Those Mississippi students qualifying
26 for less than the full Pell Grant award shall receive a
27 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant in an amount not to
28 exceed the maximum Pell Grant allowable for that individual
29 student. The award shall be applied to tuition, rooms and meals,
30 books, materials and fees, not to exceed * * * Two Thousand Five
31 Hundred Dollars (\$2,500.00) for junior and senior students
32 attending state institutions of higher learning in Mississippi or
33 four-year regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit
34 colleges and universities in Mississippi, and * * * One Thousand
35 Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) for freshmen and sophomores
36 attending state institutions of higher learning or public
37 community or junior colleges in Mississippi, or regionally
38 accredited, state-approved, nonprofit two-year or four-year
39 colleges in Mississippi * * *. An award will be prorated per
40 term, semester or quarter of the academic year for costs of
41 attendance, calculated according to the formula specified in
42 subsection (8) of this section.



43 (4) The general requirements for initial eligibility of
44 students for Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grants
45 consist of the following:

46 (a) Member of a Mississippi family whose prior year
47 adjusted gross income (AGI) exceeds the maximum allowed to qualify
48 for Pell Grant eligibility and campus-based federal aid.

49 (b) Acceptance for enrollment at any state institution
50 of higher learning or public community or junior college located
51 in Mississippi, or any regionally accredited, state-approved,
52 nonprofit two-year or four-year college or university located in
53 Mississippi and approved by the board.

54 (c) Completion of a secondary education as follows:

55 (i) Graduation from high school, as verified by
56 the institution before disbursement of the award, with a minimum
57 grade point average of 2.5 calculated on a 4.0 scale after seven
58 (7) semesters, as certified by the high school counselor or other
59 authorized school official on the application; or

60 (ii) Attendance at a home education program during
61 grade levels 9 through 12; or

62 (iii) Satisfactory completion of the High School
63 Equivalency Diploma; or

64 (iv) Successful completion of the International
65 Baccalaureate Program.

66 (d) A minimum score of fifteen (15) on the ACT test
67 except that any student entering a vocational or technical program



68 of study, or who has satisfactorily completed the High School
69 Equivalency Diploma Test and attends a community or junior
70 college, will not be required to have a test score under the ACT
71 unless a student enrolls in courses of academic study.

72 (e) Any student currently enrolled in any qualified
73 institution shall have to only meet the same requirements as
74 students who are applying for a renewal award.

75 (5) By accepting a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance
76 Grant, the student is attesting to the accuracy, completeness and
77 correctness of information provided to demonstrate the student's
78 eligibility. Falsification of such information shall result in
79 the denial of any pending grant and revocation of any award
80 currently held to the extent that no further payments shall be
81 made. Any student knowingly making false statements in order to
82 receive a grant shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable, upon
83 conviction thereof, by a fine of up to Ten Thousand Dollars
84 (\$10,000.00), a prison sentence of up to one (1) year in the
85 county jail, or both, and shall be required to return all
86 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grants wrongfully
87 obtained.

88 (6) Eligibility for renewal of Mississippi Resident Tuition
89 Assistance Grants shall be evaluated at the end of each semester,
90 or term, of each academic year. As a condition for renewal, a
91 student shall:



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

95 (b) Maintain continuous enrollment for not less than
96 two (2) semesters or three (3) quarters in each successive
97 academic year, unless granted an exception for cause by the
98 administering board; examples of cause may include student
99 participation in a cooperative program, internship program or
100 foreign study program. If a student fails to maintain continuous
101 enrollment, and is not granted an exception for cause by the
102 administering board, the student is ineligible to receive the
103 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant during the following
104 semester or trimester or term of the regular academic year.

105 (c) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least
106 2.50 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of each semester or
107 trimester or term.

108 (7) Each student, each year, must complete a Free
109 Application for Federal Student Aid form or a Statement of
110 Certification as designed by the administering board to determine
111 his/her eligibility for a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance
112 Grant.

113 (8) (a) The amount of the Mississippi Resident Tuition
114 Assistance Grant awarded to any one (1) student, up to the maximum
115 amount provided in subsection (3) of this section, shall be the
116 difference of the student's cost of attendance at his accredited



117 college of choice and the amount of federal aid such student may
118 receive, not to supplant but to supplement the amount of any
119 federal aid awarded to the student. Cost of attendance is the
120 tuition and fees of the applicable institution plus an allowance
121 for room and meals and books and materials.

122 (b) Payment of the Mississippi Resident Tuition
123 Assistance Grant shall be made payable to the recipient and the
124 educational institution and mailed directly to the institution, to
125 be applied first to tuition.

126 (9) In order for an institution to remain eligible for its
127 students to participate in the Mississippi Resident Tuition
128 Assistance Grant Program, the institution shall comply with the
129 following requirements:

130 (a) A complete and accurate roster of the eligibility
131 status of each awarded student shall be made to the board for each
132 term, semester or quarter of the academic year the student
133 receives a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant.

134 (b) The institution is required to make refunds to the
135 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant Fund for any funds
136 which have not been disbursed to the recipient, in the case of
137 students who have received a grant but who terminate enrollment
138 during the academic term, semester or quarter of the academic year
139 if an institution's refund policies permit a student to receive a
140 refund in such instance. The recipient shall be responsible for



141 the refund of any funds which have been disbursed by the
142 institution in such instance.

143 (c) If a student drops below full-time status but does
144 not terminate all enrollment during the term, semester or quarter
145 of the academic year, no refund will be required for that term.
146 However, that student is ineligible to receive the Mississippi
147 Resident Tuition Assistance Grant during the following term,
148 semester or quarter of the regular academic year.

149 (d) The board may conduct its own annual audits of any
150 institution participating in the Mississippi Resident Tuition
151 Assistance Grant Program. The board may suspend or revoke an
152 institution's eligibility to receive future monies under the
153 program if it finds that the institution has not complied with the
154 provisions of this section. In determining a student's initial
155 eligibility, the number of prior semesters enrolled will not be
156 counted against the student.

157 (10) No student may receive a Mississippi Resident Tuition
158 Assistance Grant for more than the equivalent semesters or
159 quarters required to complete one (1) baccalaureate degree or one
160 (1) certificate or associate degree program per institution.

161 (11) No student receiving a Mississippi Eminent Scholars
162 Grant, as provided in Section 37-106-31, shall be eligible to
163 receive the Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant pursuant
164 to this section unless he is eligible for such award after the
165 Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant has been considered by the



166 board when conducting an assessment of the financial resources
167 available to the student. In no case shall any student receive
168 any combination of student financial aid that would exceed the
169 cost of attendance, as defined in subsection (8)(a).

170 For purposes of this section, certificated shall mean, but
171 not be limited to, all postsecondary vocational programs in
172 eligible institutions approved by the board.

173 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
174 and after July 1, 2024.

