

By: Senator(s) Boyd, Simmons (13th)

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2527

1 AN ACT TO CREATE THE MISSISSIPPI RESIDENT PROMISE PROGRAM FOR
2 STUDENTS OF COMMUNITY COLLEGES IN THE STATE; TO SET ELIGIBILITY
3 AND OTHER QUALIFICATIONS FOR RECEIPT OF ASSISTANCE UNDER THE
4 PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE THAT AS A CONDITION FOR RENEWAL, A STUDENT
5 SHALL MAKE STEADY ACADEMIC PROGRESS TOWARD A CERTIFICATE OR DEGREE
6 AND HAVE A CUMULATIVE G.P.A. OF AT LEAST 2.50 ON A 4.0 SCALE; TO
7 PROVIDE THAT NO STUDENT MAY RECEIVE AN AWARD FOR MORE THAN THE
8 EQUIVALENT SEMESTERS OR QUARTERS REQUIRED TO COMPLETE ONE
9 CERTIFICATE OR ASSOCIATE DEGREE PROGRAM PER INSTITUTION; TO
10 PROVIDE THAT PROMISE GRANTS SHALL EQUAL THE FULL AMOUNT REMAINING
11 OF ANY TUITION AND REQUIRED FEES AFTER ALL OTHER STATE, FEDERAL,
12 INSTITUTIONAL, AND PRIVATE AID HAS BEEN APPLIED; TO SET CERTAIN
13 REQUIREMENTS TO CONTINUE TO RECEIVE ASSISTANCE FROM THE PROGRAM;
14 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

16 **SECTION 1.** (1) There is established the Mississippi
17 Resident Promise Program for college freshman and sophomores to be
18 administered by the Mississippi Postsecondary Education Financial
19 Assistance Board established under Section 37-106-9, Mississippi
20 Code of 1972, which shall set the dates and deadlines for applying
21 for an award under this section. The board shall establish such
22 rules and regulations as it deems necessary and proper to carry
23 out the purposes and intent of this section. The program shall



include Mississippi Promise Grants (Promise Grants) for recent high school graduates attending community colleges.

(2) To receive a Promise Grant, a student must meet the following qualifications:

(a) Be a resident of the State of Mississippi. Resident status for the purpose of receiving assistance under this chapter shall be determined in the same manner as resident status for tuition purposes in Sections 37-103-1 through 37-103-29, with the exception of Section 37-103-17.

(b) Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) every year for which the student wishes to be considered for aid by the deadline established by the board.

(c) Complete the Mississippi Aid Application (MAAPP) every year for which the student wishes to be considered for aid by the deadline established by the board.

(d) Be accepted for enrollment at any public community or junior college located in Mississippi.

(3) The board shall approve Mississippi Promise Grants for students who meet the following general requirements for initial eligibility:

(a) Completion of a secondary education as follows:

(i) Graduation from high school verified by the institution before disbursement of award with a minimum grade point average of 2.5 calculated on a 4.0 scale after seven (7)



semesters as certified by the high school counselor or other authorized school official on the application;

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

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

(iv) Successful completion of the International Baccalaureate Program.

(b) Enroll full-time at any public community or junior college located in Mississippi and approved by the board within twelve (12) months of completion of secondary education program.

(4) Promise Grants shall equal the full amount remaining of any tuition and required fees after all other state, federal, institutional, and private aid has been applied.

(5) Eligibility for renewal of Promise Grants shall be evaluated at the end of each semester, or term, of each academic year. As a condition for renewal, a student shall:

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

(b) Maintain continuous, full-time enrollment for not less than two (2) semesters or three (3) quarters in each successive academic year, unless granted an exception for cause by the administering board; examples of cause may include student participation in a cooperative program, internship program, or



foreign study program. If a student fails to maintain continuous enrollment, and is not granted an exception for cause by the administering board, the student shall be ineligible to receive the Promise Grant during the following semester or trimester or term of the regular academic year.

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

(6) No student may receive a Promise Grant for more than four (4) semesters or the time required to complete one (1) associate degree program, whichever is less.

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



97 (8) Payment of the Mississippi Resident Promise Grant shall
98 be made payable to the recipient and the educational institution
99 and mailed directly to the institution.

100 (9) In order for an institution to remain eligible for its
101 students to participate in the Mississippi Resident Promise Grant
102 Program, the institution shall comply with the following
103 requirements:

104 (a) A complete and accurate roster of the eligibility
105 status of each awarded student shall be made to the board for each
106 term, semester, or quarter of the academic year the student
107 receives a Mississippi Resident Promise Grant.

108 (b) The institution is required to make refunds to the
109 Mississippi Resident Promise Grant Fund for any funds which have
110 not been disbursed to the recipient, in the case of students who
111 have received a grant but who terminate enrollment during the
112 academic term, semester, or quarter of the academic year if an
113 institution's refund policies permit a student to receive a refund
114 in such instance. The recipient shall be responsible for the
115 refund of any funds which have been disbursed by the institution
116 of such instance.

117 (c) If a student drops below full-time status but does
118 not terminate all enrollment during the term, semester, or quarter
119 of the academic year, no refund will be required for that term.
120 However, that student is ineligible to receive the Mississippi



Resident Promise Grant during the following term, semester, or quarter of the regular academic year.

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

(10) No student receiving a Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant as provided in Section 37-106-31 shall be eligible to receive the Mississippi Resident Promise Grant pursuant to this section unless he or she is eligible for such award after the Mississippi Eminent Scholars Grant has been considered by the board when conducting an assessment of the financial resources available to the student. In no case shall any student receive any combination of student financial aid that would exceed the cost of attendance.

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

SECTION 2. This act shall take effect and be in force from and after July 1, 2025.

