

By: Senator(s) Hopson, Polk, Parks, Butler,  
DeBar, DeLano

To: Appropriations

## SENATE BILL NO. 3009

1 AN ACT MAKING AN APPROPRIATION TO THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF  
2 STATE INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING FOR THE SUPPORT AND  
3 MAINTENANCE OF FINANCIAL AID SCHOLARSHIP, LOAN AND GRANT PROGRAMS  
4 AND THE MISSISSIPPI OFFICE OF STUDENT FINANCIAL AID, FOR FISCAL  
5 YEAR 2026.

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

7 **SECTION 1.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
8 necessary, is hereby appropriated out of any money in the State  
9 General Fund not otherwise appropriated, to the Board of Trustees  
10 of State Institutions of Higher Learning for the support and  
11 maintenance of financial aid scholarship, loan and grant programs  
12 authorized by law and administered by the Mississippi Office of  
13 Student Financial Aid and for support of the Mississippi Office of  
14 Student Financial Aid, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025,  
15 and ending June 30, 2026.....\$ 51,650,325.00.

16 **SECTION 2.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be  
17 necessary, is hereby authorized out of the proceeds derived from  
18 any federal funds, grants, donations, fees, or other special  
19 source funds which are collected by or otherwise become available



for the support and maintenance of financial aid scholarship, loan and grant programs authorized by law including funds used as federal matching funds for the GEAR UP Mississippi Scholarship Program and administered by the Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid and for support of the Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....\$ 4,301,647.00.

**SECTION 3.** None of the funds appropriated in this act shall be paid to or for the benefit of any student who applies for the first time, subsequent to July 1, 2025, for assistance through the Southeast Asia POW/MIA Grant established under the provisions of Section 37-106-41, the Public Management Graduate Internship established under the provisions of Section 37-106-43, the State Medical Education Loan established under the provisions of Section 37-106-61, the State Dental Education Loan established under the provisions of Section 37-106-63, the Graduate and Professional Degree Forgivable Loan established under the provisions of Section 37-106-65, the Health Care Professions Forgivable Loan established under the provisions of Section 37-106-67, or the Family Protection Specialist Social Worker Forgivable Loan established under the provisions of Section 37-106-69.

**SECTION 4.** It is the intention of the Legislature that of the funds appropriated under the provisions of Section 1 of this act, the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning shall expend from the support of the out-of-state



graduate and professional studies program an amount not exceeding the funding necessary, contingent upon the availability of qualified applicants, for nine (9) new entering optometry students and the number of returning optometry students who received funding under the program during the preceding school year.

**SECTION 5.** In the allocation of funds appropriated under the provisions of Sections 1 and 2 of this act, among the student financial aid programs included herein, it is the intention of the Legislature that priority shall be given and funds shall be first allocated to all students eligible for financial aid under the provisions of Section 37-106-39, Mississippi Code of 1972.

**SECTION 6.** All funds provided for in this act shall be accounted for in an annual report, which shall be submitted at the next regular session of the Legislature within ten (10) days after the convening thereof. The report should detail for each grant, scholarship, or loan program the number of recipients, the total amount of awards made, and the average award amount. The report shall include the number of students at each institution receiving financial assistance and the amount of such assistance. For loan programs, the report shall also include a summary of the repayment status and method of repayment for student cohorts as well as an accounting of the receipt of funds in repayment. Furthermore, all funds received and expended shall be reported and otherwise accounted for in accordance with the provisions of Section 37-106-11, Mississippi Code of 1972, except where individual



identifying information must be withheld pursuant to the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), 20 USC Section 1232g 34 CFR Part 99.

No public or private institution of higher learning receiving funds under the respective provisions of this act, for the purpose of issuing scholarship grants or loans, shall issue any official transcripts for any persons who have any amount of repayment in arrears on the date such official transcript is requested.

**SECTION 7.** It is the intention of the Legislature that the agency's budget request for Fiscal Year 2027 shall be submitted to the Joint Legislative Budget Committee in a format and level of detail comparable to the format and level of detail provided during the Fiscal Year 2026 budget request process.

**SECTION 8.** Any funds appropriated pursuant to this act and paid as a fee to or deposited in a financial institution shall be in compliance with Section 109 of the Constitution of the State of Mississippi and Section 25-4-105, Mississippi Code of 1972.

**SECTION 9.** It is the intention of the Legislature that whenever two (2) or more bids are received by this agency for the purchase of commodities or equipment, and whenever all things stated in such received bids are equal with respect to price, quality and service, the Mississippi Industries for the Blind shall be given preference. A similar preference shall be given to the Mississippi Industries for the Blind whenever purchases are made without competitive bids.



95       **SECTION 10.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 1 of this  
96 act, an amount not to exceed Seventy Thousand Dollars (\$70,000.00)  
97 is provided for the Speech-Language Pathologists Loan Forgiveness  
98 Program established under the provisions of Section 37-106-73,  
99 Mississippi Code of 1972, and administered by the Mississippi  
100 Office of Student Financial Aid.

101       **SECTION 11.** Awards for the Higher Education Legislative Plan  
102 Grant Program, authorized by Section 37-106-75, shall be made to  
103 applicants meeting all program requirements and found to be in  
104 financial need according to the following definition:

105           (a) The family has one (1) child under the age of  
106 twenty-one (21), and the annual adjusted gross income of the  
107 family is less than Forty-two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars  
108 (\$42,500.00); or

109           (b) The family has annual adjusted gross income of less  
110 than Forty-two Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$42,500.00) plus  
111 Five Thousand Dollars (\$5,000.00) for each additional child under  
112 the age of twenty-one (21).

113       **SECTION 12.** Of the funds appropriated in Section 2 of this  
114 act, Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000.00) shall be derived from  
115 funds in the Education Enhancement Fund deposited pursuant to  
116 Sections 27-65-75 and 27-67-31, Mississippi Code of 1972. This  
117 amount shall be used for the Fostering Access and Inspiring True  
118 Hope (FAITH) Scholarship Program Act established by Section  
119 37-106-81, Mississippi Code of 1972, and the William F. Winter and



Jack Reed, Sr., Teacher Loan Repayment Program established by  
Section 37-106-36, Mississippi Code of 1972.

**SECTION 13.** It is the intention of the Legislature that no student should receive undergraduate grant aid through more than one state-supported undergraduate grant program in the same term of enrollment. If a student is eligible for aid through multiple grant programs, the student shall be awarded from the program that awards the larger sum.

**SECTION 14.** It is the intention of the Legislature that all students must demonstrate eligibility at the conclusion of each term during the regular academic year in order to continue to receive state-supported aid.

**SECTION 15.** The following sum, or so much thereof as may be necessary, is reappropriated out of any money in the Education Enhancement Fund not otherwise appropriated, to the Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid for the purpose of reauthorizing the expenditure of Education Enhancement Funds to defray the expenses of the Mississippi Office of Student Financial Aid, as authorized in Senate Bill 3013, 2024 Regular Session, for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2025, and ending June 30, 2026.....

.....\$ 250,000.00.

This appropriation is made for the purpose of reauthorizing the expenditure of funds for the following:

(a) William F. Winter and Jack Reed, Sr., Teacher Loan Repayment Program.....\$ 150,000.00



145 (b) Fostering Access and Inspiring True Hope (FAITH)  
146 Scholarship Program Act.....\$ 100,000.00

147 Notwithstanding the amount reappropriated under this section,  
148 the amount that may be expended under the authority of this  
149 section shall not exceed the unexpended balance of the funds  
150 remaining as of June 30, 2025, from the amount authorized for the  
151 previous fiscal year. In addition, this reappropriation shall not  
152 change the purpose for which the funds were originally authorized.

153 **SECTION 16.** The money herein appropriated shall be paid by  
154 the State Treasurer out of any money in the State Treasury to the  
155 credit of the proper fund or funds as set forth in this act, upon  
156 warrants issued by the State Fiscal Officer, and the State Fiscal  
157 Officer shall issue his warrants upon requisitions signed by the  
158 proper person, officer or officers, in the manner provided by law.

159 **SECTION 17.** This act shall take effect and be in force from  
160 and after July 1, 2025, and shall stand repealed from and after  
161 June 30, 2025.

