

By: Senator(s) Fillingane

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations

SENATE BILL NO. 2942

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-157-1, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO DELETE CERTAIN FINANCIAL NEED REQUIREMENTS FOR ELIGIBILITY FOR
3 THE STUDENT TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE
4 COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

6 **SECTION 1.** Section 37-157-1, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
7 amended as follows:

8 37-157-1. (1) The tuition at any institution of higher
9 education in the state shall be paid by the state on behalf of any
10 student who enrolls in such a school to pursue an academic
11 undergraduate degree, who applies for the payment thereof, and who
12 meets all of the following qualifications:

13 (a) Actual residence in Mississippi during the
14 twenty-four (24) months immediately preceding university
15 enrollment. For the purposes of this paragraph, residency shall
16 be demonstrated by proof of the following as required by the
17 administering agency:

18 (i) If registered to vote, being registered in
19 Mississippi.

20 (ii) If licensed to drive a motor vehicle, being
21 in possession of a Mississippi driver's license.

22 (iii) If owning a motor vehicle located within
23 Mississippi, being in possession of Mississippi registration for
24 that vehicle.

25 (iv) If earning an income, having filed a
26 Mississippi state income tax return and having complied with state
27 income tax laws and regulations.

28 (b) Having a parent or guardian who is a domiciliary of
29 Mississippi.

30 (c) Graduation from high school within the two (2)
31 years preceding the application with a minimum cumulative grade
32 point average of 2.5 calculated on a 4.0 scale.

33 (d) Successful completion of seventeen and one-half
34 (17-1/2) units of high school course work (Grade 9 level or
35 higher) which constitutes a core curriculum and meets standards
36 for admission to the desired college or university. The core
37 curriculum is defined as follows:

38 (i) English I, II, III and IV (four (4) units).

39 (ii) Algebra I and II (two (2) units).

40 (iii) Geometry, Trigonometry, Calculus or
41 comparable Advanced Mathematics (one (1) unit).

42 (iv) Biology (one (1) unit).

43 (v) Chemistry (one (1) unit).

44 (vi) Earth Science, Environmental Science,
45 Physical Science, Biology II, Chemistry II or Physics (one (1)
46 unit).

47 (vii) American History (one (1) unit).

48 (viii) World History, World Cultures, Western
49 Civilization or World Geography (one (1) unit).

50 (ix) Civics and/or Economics (one (1) unit).

51 (x) Fine Arts Survey (one (1) unit; or substitute
52 two (2) units of performance courses in music, dance or theater;
53 or substitute two (2) units of studio art courses).

54 (xi) Foreign Language (two (2) units in a single
55 language).

56 (xii) Computer Science, Computer Literacy or Data
57 Processing (one-half (1/2) unit).

58 (xiii) Electives from the above (one (1) unit).

59 (e) Having a composite score on the American College
60 Test of at least twenty (20) on the 1989 version or an equivalent
61 concordant value on an enhanced version of such test.

62 (f) Having no criminal record, except for misdemeanor
63 traffic violations.

64 * * *

65 (2) For purposes of this section:

66 (a) "Institution of higher education" shall mean any of
67 the following institutions of higher learning or community or
68 junior colleges located in Mississippi: Alcorn State University,
69 Delta State University, Jackson State University, Mississippi
70 State University, Mississippi University for Women, Mississippi
71 Valley State University, University of Mississippi, University of
72 Southern Mississippi, Coahoma Community College, Copiah-Lincoln
73 Community College, East Central Community College, East
74 Mississippi Community College, Hinds Community College, Holmes
75 Community College, Itawamba Community College, Jones County Junior
76 College, Meridian Community College, Mississippi Delta Community
77 College, Mississippi Gulf Coast Community College, Northeast
78 Mississippi Community College, Northwest Mississippi Community
79 College, Pearl River Community College, Southwest Mississippi
80 Community College, Belhaven College, Blue Mountain College,
81 Millsaps College, Mississippi College, Rust College, Tougaloo
82 College, William Carey College, Mary Holmes College, Magnolia
83 Bible College and Wood College.

84 (b) "Tuition" shall mean the semester or trimester or
85 term charges and all required fees imposed by an institution of
86 higher education as a condition of enrollment by all students.
87 However, for a two-year nonpublic institution of higher education
88 defined in paragraph (a), the tuition payments shall not exceed
89 the average charges and fees required by all of the two-year
90 public institutions of higher education defined in paragraph (a),
91 and for a four-year nonpublic institution of higher education

92 defined in paragraph (a), the tuition payments shall not exceed
93 the average charges and fees required by all of the four-year
94 public institutions of higher education defined in paragraph (a).

95 (3) The tuition at any institution of higher education in
96 the state shall be paid by the state on behalf of any student who
97 enrolls in such a school to pursue an academic undergraduate or
98 associate degree, who applies for the payment thereof, and who
99 meets the qualifications enumerated in paragraphs (a), (b), (f)
100 and (g) of subsection (1) but who fails to meet one (1) of the
101 particular requirements established by paragraph (c), (d) or (e)
102 of subsection (1) by an amount of ten percent (10%) or less.

103 (4) To maintain continued state payment of tuition, once
104 enrolled in an institution of higher education, a student shall
105 meet all of the following requirements:

106 (a) Make steady academic progress toward a degree,
107 earning not less than the minimum number of hours of credit
108 required for full-time standing in each academic period requiring
109 such enrollment;

110 (b) Maintain continuous enrollment for not less than
111 two (2) semesters or three (3) quarters in each successive
112 academic year, unless granted an exception for cause by the
113 administering agency;

114 (c) Have a cumulative grade point average of at least
115 2.5 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of the first academic
116 year and thereafter maintain such a cumulative grade point average
117 as evaluated at the end of each academic year; and

118 (d) Have no criminal record, except for misdemeanor
119 traffic violations. * * *

120 * * *

121 (5) The provisions of this chapter shall be administered by
122 the Board of Trustees of State Institutions of Higher Learning in
123 conjunction with the State Board for Community and Junior

124 Colleges. The board may provide by rule for all matters necessary
125 for the implementation of this chapter.

126 (6) By rule, the board shall provide for:

127 (a) A mechanism for informing all students of the
128 availability of the assistance provided pursuant to this chapter
129 early enough in their schooling that a salutary motivational
130 effect is possible.

131 (b) Applications, forms, financial audit procedures,
132 eligibility and other program audit procedures and other matters
133 related to efficient operation.

134 (c) A procedure for waiver through the 1996-1997
135 academic year of the program eligibility requirement for
136 successful completion of a specified core curriculum upon proper
137 documentation by the applicant that failure to comply with such
138 requirement is due solely to the fact that the required course or
139 courses were not available to the applicant at the school
140 attended.

141 * * *

142 (7) An appropriation of funds may annually be made to the
143 board sufficient to cover, in addition to any other available
144 funds, the costs of tuition required to be paid, both initial and
145 continuing, for the coming academic year. All such payments shall
146 be made directly to the institution to which such tuition is due
147 after notice to the school that the state shall pay the tuition of
148 a student and after notice from the school that the student has
149 actually enrolled.

150 (8) The board may seek, accept and expend funds from any
151 source, including private business, industry, foundations and
152 other groups as well as any federal or other governmental funding
153 available for this purpose.

154 (9) No student shall receive a grant pursuant to this
155 chapter in an amount greater than the tuition charged by the

156 school. The student must apply for a federal grant prior to
157 receiving state funds.

158 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
159 and after July 1, 2007.