

By: Representative Scoggin

To: Universities and
Colleges; Appropriations A

HOUSE BILL NO. 994

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 37-106-29, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REVISE THE ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS FOR RECEIPTS UNDER THE
3 MISSISSIPPI RESIDENT TUITION ASSISTANCE GRANT PROGRAM; TO PROVIDE
4 THAT GRANT AWARDS SHALL BE BASED ON AN ADJUSTED GROSS INCOME AS
5 DETERMINED BY THE FREE APPLICATION FOR FEDERAL STUDENT AID
6 (FAFSA); TO REVISE THE CAP ON AWARD AMOUNTS BASED ON THE
7 PERCENTAGE THRESHOLDS OF THE MEDIAN INCOME FOR A FAMILY OF FOUR IN
8 THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI; AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

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

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

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



21 (2) To be eligible to receive Mississippi Resident Tuition
22 Assistance Grant (MTAG) award, a student must meet the following
23 qualifications:

24 (a) Be a resident of the State of Mississippi, which
25 such residency status, for the purpose of receiving grant funds
26 under the MTAG Program, shall be determined in the same manner as
27 resident status for tuition purposes is prescribed in Sections
28 37-103-1 through 37-103-29, with exception being given to Section
29 37-103-17;

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

33 (c) Complete the Mississippi Aid Application (MAAPP)
34 every year for which the student wishes to be considered for aid
35 by the deadline established by the board; and

36 (d) Have received acceptance for enrollment at any
37 state institution of higher learning, public community or junior
38 college located in this, or any regionally accredited,
39 state-approved, nonprofit two-year or four-year college or
40 university located in this state and approved by the board.

41 (* * *3) The board shall approve * * * Mississippi Resident
42 Tuition Assistance Grant to * * * freshmen, sophomore, junior and
43 senior Mississippi residents who * * * enroll, on at least a
44 half-time basis, at any state institution of higher learning or



45 any four-year regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit
46 college or university located in this state.

47 (* * *4) Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance
48 Grants * * * shall be applied to tuition, rooms and meals, books,
49 materials and fees not to exceed the student's total cost of
50 attendance. Awards shall be scaled based upon the adjusted gross
51 income (AGI) as determined by the completion of the Free
52 Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), as follows:

53 (a) For students from families making at or above one
54 hundred percent (100%) of the median family income for a family of
55 four (4) in Mississippi, the award shall not exceed One Thousand
56 Dollars (\$1,000.00) for junior and senior students attending state
57 institutions of higher learning in Mississippi or four-year
58 regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit colleges and
59 universities in Mississippi, and Five Hundred Dollars (\$500.00)
60 for freshmen and sophomores attending state institutions of higher
61 learning or public community or junior colleges in Mississippi, or
62 regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit two-year or
63 four-year colleges in Mississippi, which will be prorated per
64 term, semester or quarter of the academic year for costs of
65 attendance * * *;

66 (b) For students from families making between fifty-one
67 percent (51%) and ninety-nine percent (99%) of the median family
68 income for a family of four (4) in Mississippi, the award shall
69 not exceed One Thousand Five Hundred Dollars (\$1,500.00) for



70 junior and senior students attending state institutions of higher
71 learning in Mississippi or four-year regionally accredited, state
72 approved, nonprofit colleges and universities in Mississippi, and
73 Seven Hundred Fifty Dollars (\$750.00) for freshmen and sophomores
74 attending state institutions of higher learning or public
75 community or junior colleges in Mississippi, or regionally
76 accredited, state approved, nonprofit two-year or four-year
77 colleges in Mississippi, which will be prorated per term, semester
78 or quarter of the academic year for costs of attendance; and

79 (c) For students from families making at or below fifty
80 percent (50%) of the median family income for a family of four (4)
81 in Mississippi, the award shall not exceed Two Thousand Dollars
82 (\$2,000.00) for junior and senior students attending state
83 institutions of higher learning in Mississippi or four-year
84 regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit colleges and
85 universities in Mississippi, and One Thousand Dollars (\$1,000.00)
86 for freshmen and sophomores attending state institutions of higher
87 learning or public community or junior colleges in Mississippi, or
88 regionally accredited, state-approved, nonprofit two-year or
89 four-year colleges in Mississippi, which will be prorated per
90 term, semester or quarter of the academic year for costs of
91 attendance.

92 * * *

93 (5) By accepting a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance
94 Grant, the student is attesting to the accuracy, completeness and



95 correctness of information provided to demonstrate the student's
96 eligibility. Falsification of such information shall result in
97 the denial of any pending grant and revocation of any award
98 currently held to the extent that no further payments shall be
99 made. Any student knowingly making false statements in order to
100 receive a grant shall be guilty of a misdemeanor punishable, upon
101 conviction thereof, by a fine of up to Ten Thousand Dollars
102 (\$10,000.00), a prison sentence of up to one (1) year in the
103 county jail, or both, and shall be required to return all
104 Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grants wrongfully
105 obtained.

106 (6) Eligibility for renewal of Mississippi Resident Tuition
107 Assistance Grants shall be evaluated at the end of each semester,
108 or term, of each academic year. As a condition for renewal, a
109 student shall:

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

114 * * *

115 (* * *b) Have a cumulative grade point average of at
116 least 2.50 calculated on a 4.0 scale at the end of each semester
117 or trimester or term.

118 * * * (* * *7) * * * Payment of the Mississippi Resident
119 Tuition Assistance Grant shall be made payable to the recipient



120 and the educational institution and mailed directly to the
121 institution * * *.

122 (* * *8) In order for an institution to remain eligible for
123 its students to participate in the Mississippi Resident Tuition
124 Assistance Grant Program, the institution shall comply with the
125 following requirements:

126 (a) A complete and accurate roster of the eligibility
127 status of each awarded student shall be made to the board for each
128 term, semester or quarter of the academic year the student
129 receives a Mississippi Resident Tuition Assistance Grant * * *;

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

139 * * *

140 (* * *c) The board may conduct its own annual audits
141 of any institution participating in the Mississippi Resident
142 Tuition Assistance Grant Program. The board may suspend or revoke
143 an institution's eligibility to receive future monies under the
144 program if it finds that the institution has not complied with the



145 provisions of this section. In determining a student's initial
146 eligibility, the number of prior semesters enrolled will not be
147 counted against the student.

148 (* * *9) No student may receive a Mississippi Resident
149 Tuition Assistance Grant for more than the equivalent semesters or
150 quarters required to complete one (1) baccalaureate degree or one
151 (1) certificate or associate degree program per institution.

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

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

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

