

By Representative Chestnut

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to education; amending s.
3 232.2465, F.S.; revising the academic
4 qualifications for designation as a Florida
5 Academic Scholar; clarifying scholarship
6 eligibility; amending s. 239.217, F.S.;
7 clarifying vocational gold seal endorsement
8 scholarship eligibility; clarifying language
9 relating to prohibition of multiple state merit
10 scholarships; deleting language relating to
11 Department of Education use of residual program
12 balances; amending s. 240.402, F.S.;
13 reclassifying the Florida Undergraduate
14 Scholars' Program as an award designation;
15 revising qualifications for award designation;
16 revising provisions of the application process;
17 deleting language relating to amount of awards,
18 student eligibility status, fund sources, and
19 department use of residual program balances;
20 making technical changes consistent with the
21 restructuring of the award designation program;
22 amending s. 240.4021, F.S.; establishing
23 postsecondary curriculum requirements for award
24 of a vocational gold seal endorsement
25 scholarship; clarifying eligible institutions
26 where scholarships may be used; clarifying
27 scholarship renewal requirements; clarifying
28 scholarship award amounts to be issued by the
29 department; clarifying scholarship eligibility
30 provisions for current recipients of vocational
31 gold seal endorsement awards; making technical

1 changes consistent with the restructuring of
2 the program; amending s. 240.4024, F.S.;
3 revising utilization and award provisions of
4 the Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program;
5 establishing award forfeiture procedures if
6 remedial courses are taken; revising high
7 school graduation requirements for
8 qualification for the program; establishing
9 award tiers, academic requirements, and maximum
10 awards; restructuring award renewal
11 requirements; incorporating into the program
12 award renewal requirements of the Florida
13 Undergraduate Scholars' Program; incorporating
14 into the program the Challenger Astronauts
15 Memorial Scholarship associated with the
16 Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Program;
17 clarifying program award amounts to be issued
18 by the Department of Education; establishing
19 program scholarship provisions for current
20 recipients of Florida Undergraduate Scholars
21 awards; clarifying funding sources for the
22 program; making technical changes consistent
23 with the restructuring of the program; amending
24 s. 240.4025, F.S.; specifying scholarship
25 program participation to be eligible for a
26 graduate award; amending s. 240.404, F.S.;
27 clarifying residence requirements for
28 scholarship award; amending s. 240.408, F.S.;
29 conforming provisions; amending s. 240.4085,
30 F.S.; prohibiting a Florida Postsecondary
31 Tuition Program scholarship recipient from

1 receiving money from a specified grant program;
2 amending s. 240.437, F.S.; requiring Florida
3 Postsecondary Tuition Program scholarship
4 recipients attending independent institutions
5 to participate in a testing program; providing
6 an effective date.

7

8 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

9

10 Section 1. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) and
11 subsection (4) of section 232.2465, Florida Statutes, are
12 amended to read:

13 232.2465 Florida Academic Scholars' Certificate
14 Program.--For the purpose of recognizing and rewarding
15 outstanding performance and academic achievement on the part
16 of public school students and nonpublic school students, the
17 Commissioner of Education shall award to each high school
18 graduate who meets the requirements specified herein, and as
19 further specified by the State Board of Education, a special
20 certificate recognizing and designating the graduate as a
21 Florida Academic Scholar.

22 (1) In order to qualify as a Florida Academic Scholar,
23 a student must:

24 (a) Earn a minimum unweighted grade point average of
25 3.5 on a 4.0 scale for all coursework, which must include
26 completion of ~~Complete~~ a program of at least 24 credits in
27 advanced-level studies as prescribed by the State Board of
28 Education, including as a minimum:

29 1. Four years of progressively advanced instruction in
30 language arts, including courses in English composition and
31 literature;

1 2. Four years of progressively advanced instruction in
2 science, including laboratory courses in biology, chemistry,
3 and physics where laboratory facilities are available;

4 3. Four years of progressively advanced instruction in
5 mathematics, including courses in algebra and geometry and
6 calculus or trigonometry;

7 4. Two years of sequential foreign language;

8 5. One year of instruction in art and music or in
9 either art or music;

10 6. Three years of instruction in social studies,
11 including courses in American history and government, world
12 history, and comparative political and economic systems; and

13 7. One year of instruction in health and physical
14 education to include assessment, improvement, and maintenance
15 of personal fitness.

16 (4) Each Florida Academic Scholar ~~who demonstrates~~
17 ~~advanced proficiency, as defined by the State Board of~~
18 ~~Education, through performance on the combined verbal and~~
19 ~~quantitative portions of an approved standardized test and who~~
20 enrolls full time in a state university, a public community
21 college, a nursing diploma school approved by the Board of
22 Nursing, or a private institution of higher education which is
23 accredited by a member of the Commission on Recognition of
24 Postsecondary Accreditation or the credits of which are
25 acceptable for transfer to state universities is eligible for
26 a scholarship under Tier I provisions of s. 240.4024 ~~from the~~
27 ~~Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Program, as provided by s.~~
28 ~~240.402.~~

29 Section 2. Subsections (3) and (5) of section 239.217,
30 Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

31

1 239.217 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Endorsement
2 Program.--

3 (3) A Florida gold seal vocational endorsement
4 recipient must meet the postsecondary enrollment requirements
5 of s. 240.4021 in order to receive a vocational gold seal
6 endorsement scholarship. A student who receives a Florida
7 gold seal vocational endorsement and is eligible to receive a
8 Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program Undergraduate Scholars'
9 award pursuant to s. 240.4024 may receive either a Florida
10 vocational gold seal endorsement vocational scholarship or a
11 Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program award Undergraduate
12 Scholars' scholarship, but not both.

13 (5) Funds appropriated by the Legislature for the
14 Florida Gold Seal Vocational Endorsement Program shall be
15 deposited in the State Student Financial Assistance Trust
16 Fund. ~~Notwithstanding the provisions of s. 216.301 and~~
17 ~~pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the trust fund at the~~
18 ~~end of any fiscal year that has been allocated to the program~~
19 ~~shall remain therein and shall be available for carrying out~~
20 ~~the purposes of this section and s. 240.4021.~~

21 Section 3. Section 240.402, Florida Statutes, is
22 amended to read:

23 240.402 Florida Undergraduate Scholars award
24 designation Scholars' Program.--

25 (1) There is created a Florida Undergraduate Scholars
26 award designation Scholars' Program, to be administered by the
27 Department of Education. The department shall designate
28 Florida Undergraduate Scholars and award such designees
29 scholarships under Tier II provisions of s. 240.4024. An
30 award designee is any to each Florida student who does not
31

1 qualify as a Florida Academic Scholar, pursuant to s.
2 232.2465, but who:
3 (a)1. Is recognized by the merit or achievement
4 programs of the National Merit Scholarship Corporation as a
5 scholar or finalist;
6 2. Has obtained a 3.5 unweighted grade point average
7 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent, in high school subjects
8 acceptable for credit toward a diploma and has attained at
9 least the minimum score as determined by rules of the
10 Department of Education on the combined verbal and
11 quantitative parts of the Scholastic Aptitude Test, the
12 Scholastic Assessment Test, or the recentered Scholastic
13 Assessment Test of the College Entrance Examination or an
14 equivalent score on the American College Testing Program;
15 3. Has been enrolled in, and will complete no later
16 than the year of the initial award, a college preparatory
17 curriculum, has obtained a 3.0 unweighted grade point average
18 on a 4.0 scale, or the equivalent, and has attained at least
19 the minimum score as determined by rules of the Department of
20 Education on the combined verbal and quantitative parts of the
21 Scholastic Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or
22 the recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College
23 Entrance Examination or an equivalent score on the American
24 College Testing Program;
25 ~~4.3.~~ Has attended a home education program during
26 grade levels 9 through 12 according to the provisions of s.
27 232.02(4) and has attained at least the minimum score as
28 determined by rules of the Department of Education on the
29 combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic
30 Aptitude Test, the Scholastic Assessment Test, or the
31 recentered Scholastic Assessment Test of the College Entrance

1 Examination or an equivalent score on the American College
2 Testing Program; or
3 ~~4. Has been designated by the State Board of Education~~
4 ~~as a Florida Academic Scholar, pursuant to the provisions of~~
5 ~~s. 232.2465; or~~
6 5. Has been awarded an International Baccalaureate
7 Diploma from the International Baccalaureate Office.
8 (b) Meets the general requirements for student
9 eligibility as provided in s. 240.404, except as otherwise
10 provided in this section.
11 (c) Receives a Florida high school diploma, or its
12 equivalent as described in s. 229.814. Any student who is
13 enrolled on a full-time basis in the early admission program
14 of an eligible postsecondary institution or has attended a
15 home education program during grade levels 9 through 12
16 according to the provisions of s. 232.02(4) shall be exempt
17 from this requirement. Also exempted shall be the dependents
18 of Florida residents who are on military or public service
19 assignments away from Florida when such dependents live with
20 such Florida residents and receive high school diplomas from
21 non-Florida schools.
22 (d) Files an application for an award designation
23 during his or her last year in high school within established
24 time limits.
25 (e) Attends, on a full-time basis, a state university
26 or community college authorized by Florida law; a nursing
27 diploma school approved by the Board of Nursing; or any
28 Florida college, university, or community college which is
29 accredited by a member of the Commission on Recognition of
30 Postsecondary Accreditation the credits of which are
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1 acceptable for transfer without qualification to state
2 universities.

3 (f) Enrolls as a first-time-in-college student. Any
4 student who earns postsecondary academic credit prior to or
5 during the summer immediately subsequent to receiving a high
6 school diploma, who is dually enrolled in secondary and
7 postsecondary educational institutions, or who is enrolled in
8 the early admission program of a postsecondary institution
9 shall be exempt from this requirement.

10 (2)(a) The department shall accept applications for
11 initial award designations ~~awards~~ postmarked between February
12 15 and April 1 of each year. The department may designate as a
13 Florida Undergraduate Scholar any qualified applicant who
14 submits an initial application that is ~~make awards to initial~~
15 ~~applicants who submit applications that are~~ postmarked after
16 April 1, pursuant to rules of the State Board of Education.

17 (b) Students who apply for award designation ~~awards~~ no
18 later than April 1 during their last year in high school may
19 later reapply to receive Tier II scholarship awards during
20 subsequent application periods when they do not accept their
21 initial awards. Similarly, students who receive initial awards
22 and who later do not accept renewal awards may reapply to
23 receive awards during subsequent application periods. Students
24 who apply under this paragraph must submit reinstatement
25 applications within 3 years of filing their initial
26 applications. The department shall accept reinstatement
27 applications postmarked between February 15 and June 1 of each
28 year and shall determine the eligibility of such applicants in
29 the same manner as first-time applicants, except that students
30 who apply pursuant to this paragraph shall be exempt from the
31 provisions of paragraph (1)(f) and shall be required to have

1 maintained the equivalent of a 3.2 cumulative grade point
2 average on a 4.0 scale for all college work attempted. The
3 department shall not grant award designation ~~make awards~~ to
4 reinstatement applicants who submit applications that are
5 postmarked after June 1.

6 (c) The department shall create a renewal application
7 for each student who received a Tier II scholarship ~~the award~~
8 for one or more terms during the immediately preceding
9 academic year.

10 ~~(3)(a) The annual award to a student shall be \$2,500;~~
11 ~~however, the highest-ranked, eligible, initial applicant from~~
12 ~~each county shall be designated as a Challenger Astronauts~~
13 ~~Memorial Award recipient and shall receive an annual award of~~
14 ~~\$4,000. The department shall rank eligible initial applicants~~
15 ~~for purposes of designating the Challenger Astronauts Memorial~~
16 ~~Award recipients on the basis of unweighted grade point~~
17 ~~averages on a 4.0 scale and test scores achieved on the~~
18 ~~combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic~~
19 ~~Aptitude Test of the College Entrance Examination. Renewal~~
20 ~~awards shall be \$4,000 annually for eligible Challenger~~
21 ~~Astronauts Memorial Award recipients and \$2,500 annually for~~
22 ~~all other eligible applicants. Payment of an award shall be~~
23 ~~transmitted, on behalf of the student, to the president of the~~
24 ~~college, university, community college, or nursing diploma~~
25 ~~school which the recipient is attending or to his or her~~
26 ~~representative in advance of the registration period. If~~
27 ~~funds are insufficient to provide the full amount of~~
28 ~~scholarship authorized in this section to each eligible~~
29 ~~applicant, the department may prorate available funds and make~~
30 ~~a partial award to each eligible applicant.~~

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1 ~~(b) Within 15 days of the end of regular registration,~~
2 ~~inclusive of a drop-add period, institutions shall certify to~~
3 ~~the department the eligibility status of each awarded student.~~
4 ~~The eligibility status of each student to receive a~~
5 ~~disbursement shall be determined by each institution as of~~
6 ~~this date. Institutions shall not be required to reevaluate a~~
7 ~~student's eligibility status after this date for purposes of~~
8 ~~amending eligibility determinations previously made. However,~~
9 ~~an institution shall be requested to make refunds for students~~
10 ~~who receive award disbursements and terminate enrollment for~~
11 ~~any reason during the academic term when an institution's~~
12 ~~refund policies permit a student to receive a refund under~~
13 ~~these circumstances.~~

14 ~~(c) Institutions shall certify to the department the~~
15 ~~amount of funds disbursed to each student and shall remit to~~
16 ~~the department any undisbursed advances within 60 days of the~~
17 ~~end of regular registration.~~

18 ~~(4) A recipient shall maintain the equivalent of a 3.2~~
19 ~~cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale, or shall~~
20 ~~maintain an approved equivalent student progress evaluation~~
21 ~~plan, on at least 12 hours per quarter, trimester, or semester~~
22 ~~in order to be eligible for a continuation of the award. No~~
23 ~~student may receive a Florida Undergraduate Scholars' Program~~
24 ~~award for more than the equivalent of 8 semesters or 12~~
25 ~~quarters. However, a student enrolled in a 5-year~~
26 ~~undergraduate degree program may receive an award for the~~
27 ~~equivalent of 10 semesters or 15 quarters. The award may be~~
28 ~~renewed annually upon documentation by the recipient that he~~
29 ~~or she meets the necessary qualifications. If any recipient~~
30 ~~transfers from one accredited Florida college, university,~~
31 ~~community college, or nursing diploma school to another~~

1 ~~eligible institution, his or her award will be transferable,~~
2 ~~provided he or she is otherwise eligible for the award.~~

3 (3)~~(5)~~ Advertising or notification to students,
4 teachers, parents, guidance counselors, and principals or
5 other relevant school administrators of the criteria and
6 application procedures for ~~the~~ award designation shall be the
7 responsibility of the department. Such advertising or
8 notification shall begin no later than January of each year.

9 (4)~~(6)~~ The Department of Education shall administer
10 this program under policies and rules established by the State
11 Board of Education.

12 ~~(7) The Legislature shall appropriate, from general~~
13 ~~revenue and from the Challenger Astronauts Memorial~~
14 ~~Undergraduate Scholarship Trust Fund, funds to be deposited~~
15 ~~into the State Student Financial Assistance Trust Fund for the~~
16 ~~purpose of funding this act. Notwithstanding the provisions~~
17 ~~of s. 216.301 and pursuant to s. 216.351, any balance in the~~
18 ~~trust fund that has been allocated to the Florida~~
19 ~~Undergraduate Scholars' Program at the end of any fiscal year~~
20 ~~shall remain therein and shall be available for carrying out~~
21 ~~the purposes of this section.~~

22 Section 4. Paragraphs (c) and (d) of subsection (3),
23 paragraph (d) of subsection (6), and paragraph (a) of
24 subsection (7) of section 240.4021, Florida Statutes, are
25 amended, and paragraph (d) is added to subsection (7) of said
26 section, to read:

27 240.4021 Vocational Gold Seal Endorsement Scholarship
28 Program.--

29 (3) The department is authorized to make awards to a
30 student who:

31

1 (c) Enrolls as a full-time certificate-seeking or
2 degree-seeking student at:

3 1. A public state university, community college, or
4 area vocational-technical school authorized by law at which
5 the postsecondary portion of a sequential program of studies
6 in a vocational job-preparatory or technology-education
7 curriculum is offered; or

8 2. A nonpublic postsecondary school or college under
9 the jurisdiction of the State Board of Independent
10 Postsecondary Vocational, Technical, Trade, and Business
11 Schools or the State Board of Independent Colleges and
12 Universities, at which the postsecondary portion of a
13 sequential program of studies in a vocational job-preparatory
14 or technology-education program is offered. To be eligible, a
15 licensed school or college must have been in continuous
16 operation for at least 5 years and must have held a biennial
17 or regular license for at least 2 years, must not have been
18 the subject of a finding of probable cause and subsequent
19 disciplinary action by either board, must not be required by
20 the Federal Government to apply for reimbursement for Title IV
21 funding, and must be located in and chartered by the state. A
22 licensed school or college or a school or college exempt from
23 licensure must be accredited by the Career College
24 Association, the Accrediting Bureau of Health Education
25 Schools, or the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools
26 and must never have had its accreditation removed; and

27 (d) Is enrolled in the postsecondary portion of a
28 sequential program of studies in a vocational job-preparatory
29 or technology-education program ~~a course or program of at~~
30 ~~least 900 clock hours, 36 quarter hours, or 24 semester hours~~
31 ~~which awards a diploma as defined in s. 246.203.~~

1 1. A student enrolled in a nonpublic school must be
2 enrolled in a program which is comparable and compatible, as
3 determined by the State Board of Independent Postsecondary
4 Vocational, Technical, Trade, and Business Schools, with a
5 public job-preparatory vocational-technical program and the
6 program standards, including curriculum framework and student
7 performance standards, as provided by rule of the State Board
8 of Education.

9 2. A student enrolled in a nonpublic school must meet
10 the same basic skills requirements as a student enrolled in
11 public certificate career education as provided by rule of the
12 State Board of Education.

13 (6)

14 (d) The department shall issue the maximum annual
15 award to each eligible applicant if funds are available. If
16 funds are insufficient to provide a full scholarship to each
17 eligible applicant, the department may prorate available funds
18 and make a partial award to each eligible applicant.

19 (7)(a) Notwithstanding s. 240.404(3), a vocational
20 gold seal scholarship may be received for a maximum of 2
21 years, 4 semesters, or an equivalent number of credit hours.
22 The annual maximum award to an initial ~~each~~ recipient shall be
23 equal to 75 percent of the tuition and mandatory fees at an
24 eligible postsecondary institution, plus a book stipend of
25 \$112.50 per semester or an annual ~~a~~ maximum of \$225~~\$2,000~~.
26 The maximum award in a renewal year or from the third semester
27 onward shall be equal to 100 percent of the tuition and
28 mandatory fees at an eligible postsecondary institution, plus
29 a book stipend of \$150 per semester or an annual maximum of
30 \$300. Payment of an award shall be transmitted in advance of
31 the registration period each semester on behalf of the student

1 to the president of the university or community college, or
2 his or her representative, or to the director of the area
3 vocational-technical school which the recipient is attending,
4 or his or her representative, except that the department may
5 withhold payment if the receiving institution fails to report
6 or to make refunds to the department as required in paragraphs
7 (b) and (c).

8 (d) Any recipient of a vocational gold seal
9 endorsement award who received his or her initial award to be
10 used no later than the 1996-1997 academic year remains
11 eligible to receive a vocational gold seal endorsement award
12 for up to 4 years, 8 semesters, or an equivalent number of
13 credit hours, subject to the renewal eligibility criteria of
14 subsection (5). Semesters or quarters in which the vocational
15 gold seal endorsement award has already been received shall be
16 credited against the number of semesters or quarters of
17 eligibility remaining for an award. Award recipients subject
18 to this paragraph are required, notwithstanding paragraph
19 (3)(d), to be enrolled in a course or program of at least 900
20 clock hours, 36 quarter hours, or 24 semester hours which
21 awards a diploma as defined in s. 246.203. The maximum annual
22 award to recipients subject to this paragraph is equal to the
23 monetary value of the maximum annual community college award
24 for the renewal year of the scholarship pursuant to this
25 subsection.

26 Section 5. Section 240.4024, Florida Statutes, 1996
27 Supplement, is amended to read:

28 240.4024 Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program.--

29 (1)(a) The Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program is
30 hereby created to reward outstanding high school students with
31 financial assistance in degree, diploma, or certificate

1 ~~programs at any Florida public university, community college,~~
2 ~~or technical institute.~~ This financial assistance shall be in
3 the form of scholarships and may be used to assist with the
4 cost of education, not to exceed the cost of tuition,
5 mandatory fees, and books. ~~Except as otherwise provided in~~
6 ~~this section, the scholarship shall cover the full cost of~~
7 ~~tuition subject to the availability of funds. The scholarship~~
8 ~~may not be used for remedial courses.~~

9 (b) Remedial courses may not be taken during any
10 academic term in which a scholarship is received. If a
11 scholarship recipient enrolls in remedial courses during an
12 academic term in which he or she utilizes a scholarship, the
13 scholarship for that term is forfeited and the recipient must
14 pay the postsecondary institution he or she attends the amount
15 forfeited. Institutions must remit all forfeited funds to the
16 state for deposit into the Educational Enhancement Trust Fund.

17 (2) In order to be eligible to receive a scholarship
18 under the Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program, an
19 initial-year applicant must:

20 (a) Be a Florida resident.

21 (b) Receive a Florida high school diploma, or its
22 equivalent as described in s. 229.814, in or after 1997 ~~1996~~.
23 Any student who is enrolled on a full-time basis in the early
24 admission program of an eligible postsecondary institution or
25 has attended a home education program during grade levels 9
26 through 12 according to the provisions of s. 232.02(4) shall
27 be exempt from this requirement. Also exempt shall be the
28 dependents of Florida residents who are on military or public
29 service assignments away from Florida when such dependents
30 live with such Florida residents and receive high school
31 diplomas from non-Florida schools.

1 (c) Have not been convicted of a felony.

2 (d)1. At the time of application or by the end of the
3 senior year, ~~have been enrolled in, and intend to complete, a~~
4 ~~college preparatory curriculum,~~ have an unweighted grade point
5 average of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale in any curriculum, and
6 ~~have attained at least the minimum score established by the~~
7 ~~Department of Education on the American College Test or the~~
8 ~~Scholastic Assessment Test; or~~

9 2. ~~At the time of application or by the end of the~~
10 ~~senior year, have been enrolled in a curriculum other than a~~
11 ~~college preparatory curriculum, have an unweighted grade point~~
12 ~~average of 3.0 or above on a 4.0 scale, and have attained at~~
13 ~~least the minimum score established by the department on the~~
14 ~~American College Test or the Scholastic Assessment Test;~~

15 2.3. At the time of application, be a home education
16 program student, or a high school equivalency diploma
17 recipient, who has attained at least the minimum score
18 established by the department on the American College Test or
19 the Scholastic Assessment Test.

20 (e) Utilize an initial scholarship by the date
21 established by the department.

22 (3)(a) Florida Postsecondary Tuition Program awards
23 shall be offered in three tiers conditioned upon the
24 cumulative academic achievement of eligible students in grades
25 9 through 12. The tiers are delineated as follows:

26 1. Tier I; Florida Academic Scholars.--An eligible
27 student qualifying as a Florida Academic Scholar, pursuant to
28 s. 232.2465, is designated in Tier I. The maximum award for
29 this tier is equal to 100 percent of the annual tuition and
30 mandatory fees at any eligible Florida postsecondary
31 institution, plus a book stipend of \$150 per semester or an

1 annual maximum of \$300. However, a Florida Academic Scholar
2 who enrolls at a nonpublic postsecondary institution under
3 provisions of s. 232.2465(4) shall receive an annual award
4 equal to the maximum annual Tier I award offered for
5 enrollment at a state university.

6 2. Tier II; Florida Undergraduate Scholars.--Any
7 eligible student not qualifying under Tier I but qualifying as
8 an award designee pursuant to s. 240.402 is designated as a
9 Florida Undergraduate Scholar in Tier II. The maximum award
10 for this tier is equal to 75 percent of the annual tuition and
11 mandatory fees at any eligible Florida postsecondary
12 institution, plus a book stipend of \$112.50 per semester or an
13 annual maximum of \$225. However, a Florida Undergraduate
14 Scholar who enrolls at a nonpublic postsecondary institution
15 under provisions of s. 240.402(1)(e) shall receive an annual
16 award equal to the maximum annual Tier II award offered for
17 enrollment at a state university.

18 3. Tier III; Florida Student Achievement Awards.--An
19 eligible student not qualifying under Tier I or Tier II is
20 designated as a recipient of a Florida Student Achievement
21 Award in Tier III. The maximum annual award for this tier is
22 50 percent of the annual tuition and mandatory fees at any
23 eligible Florida postsecondary institution, plus a book
24 stipend of \$75 per semester or an annual maximum of \$150.

25 (b)1. Students may receive annual awards for the first
26 30 semester credit hours attempted at any eligible Florida
27 postsecondary educational institution. As used in this
28 section, except for provisions in paragraph (a) for students
29 qualifying in Tier I or Tier II, the term "eligible Florida
30 postsecondary institution" means an institution within the
31 State University System, the community college system, or a

1 public vocational-technical institution. ~~The maximum amount of~~
2 ~~the award shall include tuition, mandatory fees, and a book~~
3 ~~allowance of up to \$300, except that students who receive a~~
4 ~~grade point average of 3.5 on a 4.0 scale, or above, in a~~
5 ~~college preparatory curriculum may receive a higher award as~~
6 ~~determined by the department.~~ Awards shall be disbursed in
7 equal installments each academic term, except that a partial
8 award shall be disbursed if an eligible student does not take
9 a full-time courseload, in which case the award shall be
10 prorated based upon the proportion of hours taken to hours
11 required for a full award.

12 2. For Tier III scholarships only, full-time
13 enrollment shall not be required. Tier III awards through
14 ~~this program~~ may be made to degree-seeking students enrolled
15 for a minimum of 6 credit hours who meet the general
16 requirements for student eligibility as provided in this
17 section. Students enrolled for 6 to 8 credit hours may receive
18 up to one-half of the maximum Tier III award; students
19 enrolled for 9 to 11 credit hours may receive up to
20 three-fourths of the maximum Tier III award; and students
21 enrolled for 12 or more credit hours may receive up to the
22 full Tier III award.

23 3.(a) A scholarship shall be awarded prior to the
24 certification or award of a federal family education loan or
25 federal direct loan and shall be considered in the
26 certification or calculation of the student's loan
27 eligibility.

28 ~~(b) Students attending a Florida public technical~~
29 ~~institute in order to earn a certificate or diploma may~~
30 ~~qualify for tuition scholarships for the cost of tuition,~~
31 ~~mandatory fees, and up to \$150 per semester for a book~~

1 ~~allowance. Awards through this program may be made to students~~
2 ~~enrolled for a minimum of 6 credit hours in a job preparatory~~
3 ~~vocational program who meet the general requirements for~~
4 ~~student eligibility as provided in this section. Students~~
5 ~~enrolled for 6 to 8 credit hours may receive up to one-half of~~
6 ~~the maximum award; students enrolled for 9 to 11 credit hours~~
7 ~~may receive up to three-fourths of the maximum award; and~~
8 ~~students enrolled for 12 or more credit hours may receive up~~
9 ~~to the full award.~~

10 (4)(a)1. Notwithstanding s. 240.404(1), a recipient of
11 a Tier I or Tier II award shall maintain the equivalent of a
12 3.2 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale, or shall
13 maintain an approved equivalent student progress evaluation
14 plan, on at least 12 hours per quarter, trimester, or semester
15 in order to be eligible for a continuation of the award. No
16 student may receive a Tier I or Tier II award for more than
17 the equivalent of 8 semesters or 12 quarters. However, a
18 student enrolled in a 5-year undergraduate degree program may
19 receive an award for the equivalent of 10 semesters or 15
20 quarters. The award may be renewed annually upon
21 documentation by the recipient that he or she meets the
22 necessary qualifications. If any recipient transfers from one
23 accredited Florida college, university, community college, or
24 nursing diploma school to another eligible institution, his or
25 her award shall be transferable, provided he or she is
26 otherwise eligible for the award. A student who does not
27 qualify for renewal of the Tier I or Tier II award may renew
28 his or her award at the Tier III level if the qualifications
29 of paragraph (b) are met.

30 2. Within 15 days of the end of regular registration,
31 inclusive of a drop-add period, institutions shall certify to

1 the department the eligibility status of each Tier I or Tier
2 II award recipient. The eligibility status of each student to
3 receive a disbursement shall be determined by each institution
4 as of this date. Institutions shall not be required to
5 reevaluate a student's eligibility status after this date for
6 purposes of amending eligibility determinations previously
7 made. However, an institution shall be requested to make
8 refunds for students who receive award disbursements and
9 terminate enrollment for any reason during the academic term
10 when an institution's refund policies permit a student to
11 receive a refund under these circumstances.

12 3. Institutions shall certify to the department the
13 amount of funds disbursed to each Tier I or Tier II award
14 recipient and shall remit to the department any undisbursed
15 advances within 60 days of the end of regular registration.

16 (b) Students receiving a Tier III award may renew the
17 a scholarship for their sophomore, junior, and senior years of
18 undergraduate study. To do so, the student must:

19 1.(a) Notwithstanding s. 240.404(1), maintain at least
20 a 3.0 cumulative grade point average on a 4.0 scale.

21 2.(b) Be making satisfactory academic progress.

22 3.(c) Have used, within a maximum period of 5 years
23 from the date of high school graduation, less than the maximum
24 number of semesters of eligibility as determined by the
25 department. The department may waive this paragraph for
26 students who demonstrate that compliance would entail
27 extraordinary hardship.

28 (5) A student planning to attend an eligible
29 postsecondary institution must comply with any application
30 requirements established by the institution. Upon verifying
31 that the student meets eligibility criteria established in

1 this section, the eligible institution shall submit to the
2 department a request for the appropriate level of payment.
3 The department shall establish the necessary data to be
4 reported and a date by which such requests for payment are due
5 each semester. Late requests shall be honored by the
6 department to the extent that funds are available after all
7 timely requests have been funded.

8 (6) The highest-ranked, eligible, initial applicant
9 from each county shall be designated as a Challenger
10 Astronauts Memorial award recipient and shall receive an
11 annual award equal to the maximum annual award available in
12 the recipient's qualifying tier plus an additional \$1,500.
13 The department shall rank eligible initial applicants for
14 purposes of designating the Challenger Astronauts Memorial
15 award recipients on the basis of unweighted grade point
16 averages on a 4.0 scale and test scores achieved on the
17 combined verbal and quantitative parts of the Scholastic
18 Aptitude Test of the College Entrance Examination. Renewal
19 awards for eligible Challenger Astronauts Memorial award
20 recipients shall be equal to the maximum annual award
21 available in the recipient's qualifying tier in the renewal
22 year plus an additional \$1,500. Payment of an award shall be
23 transmitted, on behalf of the student, to the president of the
24 college, university, community college, or nursing diploma
25 school which the recipient is attending or to his or her
26 representative in advance of the registration period.

27 ~~(7)~~(6) The department shall adopt rules as necessary
28 to implement and administer the Florida Postsecondary Tuition
29 Program.

30 ~~(8)~~(7) The program shall be implemented to the extent
31 authorized annually in the General Appropriations Act. The

1 department shall issue the maximum annual award to each
2 eligible applicant in each tier if funds are available. If
3 funds are insufficient to provide the full amount of
4 scholarships authorized in this section to each eligible
5 applicant, the department may prorate available funds and make
6 a partial award to each eligible applicant.

7 (9) Any recipient of a Florida Undergraduate Scholars
8 award who received his or her initial award to be used no
9 later than the 1996-1997 academic year is eligible to receive
10 a Tier I award subject to the renewal eligibility criteria of
11 subsection (4). Semesters or quarters in which the Florida
12 Undergraduate Scholars award has already been received are
13 credited against the number of semesters or quarters of
14 eligibility remaining for a Florida Postsecondary Tuition
15 Program award.

16 (10) The Legislature shall appropriate funds for
17 awards authorized in this section from general revenue, the
18 Educational Enhancement Trust Fund, and the Challenger
19 Astronauts Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship Trust Fund.

20 Section 6. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
21 240.4025, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

22 240.4025 Florida Graduate Scholars' Fund.--

23 (1) There is created a Florida Graduate Scholars' Fund
24 to be administered by the Department of Education. The
25 department shall award fellowships to each Florida graduate
26 student who:

27 (a)1. Has received a scholarship pursuant to s.
28 240.402 or s. 240.4024 for the duration of his or her
29 undergraduate enrollment; or

30 2. Has obtained a 3.5 grade point average on a 4.0
31 scale, or the equivalent, in college-level academic subjects

1 taken during his or her last 2 academic years and has scored
2 1,200 or above on the combined verbal and quantitative parts
3 of the Graduate Record Examination.

4 Section 7. Paragraph (a) of subsection (1) of section
5 240.404, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

6 240.404 General requirements for student eligibility
7 for state financial aid.--

8 (1)(a) The general requirements for eligibility of
9 students for state financial aid awards consist of the
10 following:

11 1. Acceptance at a state university or community
12 college; a nursing diploma school approved by the Florida
13 Board of Nursing; a Florida college, university, or community
14 college which is accredited by a member of the Commission on
15 Recognition of Postsecondary Accreditation; any Florida
16 institution the credits of which are acceptable for transfer
17 to state universities; any area technical center; or any
18 private vocational-technical institution accredited by a
19 member of the Commission on Recognition of Postsecondary
20 Accreditation.

21 2. Participation in the college-level communication
22 and computation skills testing program. This requirement is
23 limited to students seeking associate's or bachelor's degrees.

24 3. Residency in this state for no less than 1 year
25 preceding the award of aid for a program established pursuant
26 to s. 240.402, s. 240.4021, s. 240.4024, s. 240.4085, s.
27 240.409, s. 240.4093, s. 240.4095, s. 240.4097, s. 240.412, s.
28 240.4125, s. 240.413, s. 240.4987, s. 240.605, or s. 240.606.
29 Residency in this state must be for purposes other than to
30 obtain an education. Resident status for purposes of receiving
31 state financial aid awards shall be determined in the same

1 manner as resident status for tuition purposes pursuant to s.
2 240.1201 and rules of the State Board of Education.

3 4. Compliance with Selective Service System
4 registration requirements pursuant to s. 240.4045.

5 5. Submission of certification attesting to the
6 accuracy, completeness, and correctness of information
7 provided to demonstrate a student's eligibility to receive
8 state financial aid awards. Falsification of such information
9 shall result in the denial of any pending application and
10 revocation of any award currently held to the extent that no
11 further payments shall be made. Additionally, students who
12 knowingly make false statements in order to receive state
13 financial aid awards shall be guilty of a misdemeanor of the
14 second degree subject to the provisions of s. 837.06 and shall
15 be required to return all state financial aid awards
16 wrongfully obtained.

17 Section 8. Subsection (1) of section 240.408, Florida
18 Statutes, is amended to read:

19 240.408 Challenger Astronauts Memorial Undergraduate
20 Scholarship Trust Fund.--

21 (1) There is created the Challenger Astronauts
22 Memorial Undergraduate Scholarship Trust Fund which shall
23 receive distributions as provided by s. 320.08058. The
24 Comptroller shall authorize expenditures from this fund for
25 Challenger Astronauts Memorial awards pursuant to s. 240.4024
26 ~~240.402~~, and any remaining balances may be expended for
27 graduate fellowships in space science, space commerce, or
28 space policy research pursuant to s. 240.4025, and for
29 education/business partnership programs which involve teacher
30 development strategies pursuant to s. 229.602, upon receipt of
31 vouchers approved by the Department of Education. The

1 Comptroller shall also authorize expenditures from this fund
2 for Challenger Astronauts Memorial Undergraduate Scholarships
3 for students who participated in this program prior to July 1,
4 1993, provided that such students continue to meet the renewal
5 eligibility requirements that were in effect at the time that
6 their original awards were made. Any balance therein at the
7 end of any fiscal year shall remain therein and shall be
8 available for carrying out the purposes of these programs.

9 Section 9. Subsection (7) of section 240.4085, Florida
10 Statutes, is amended to read:

11 240.4085 Florida Student Tuition Scholarship Grant
12 Program.--

13 (7) No student receiving an award pursuant to s.
14 240.402 or s. 240.4024 shall be eligible to receive a Florida
15 Student Tuition Scholarship Grant. No student receiving a
16 Florida Student Tuition Scholarship Grant shall receive a
17 student assistance grant pursuant to s. 240.409, s. 240.4095,
18 or s. 240.4097 unless he or she is eligible for such award
19 after the Florida Student Tuition Scholarship Grant has been
20 considered by the department when conducting an assessment of
21 the financial resources available to the student. A student
22 receiving a Florida Student Tuition Scholarship Grant shall
23 not be eligible to receive payment or credit from any other
24 state-funded program established specifically to provide for
25 payment of tuition and fees, except a student assistance grant
26 as provided in s. 240.409, s. 240.4095, or s. 240.4097 and a
27 Florida resident access grant as provided in s. 240.605.

28 Section 10. Paragraph (f) of subsection (2) of section
29 240.437, Florida Statutes, is amended to read:

30 240.437 Student financial aid planning and
31 development.--

1 (2) The objective of a state program is the
2 maintenance of a state student financial aid program to
3 supplement a basic national program which will provide equal
4 access to postsecondary education to citizens of this state
5 who have the ability and motivation to benefit from a
6 postsecondary education. In the development of a state program
7 to achieve this objective, it shall be the policy that:

8 (f) Effective August 1, 1985, students enrolled in
9 associate in arts degree programs and bachelor's degree
10 programs in independent institutions in this state who receive
11 state aid pursuant to s. 240.402, s. 240.4024, s. 240.4063, s.
12 240.4085, s. 240.4095, s. 240.4097, s. 240.412, s. 240.605, or
13 s. 240.606 participate in the college-level communication and
14 computation skills testing program provided in s. 229.551.

15 The department and the eligible institutions shall negotiate
16 an agreement that will assure that the test is available to
17 students either directly through the independent institutions
18 or on a contractual basis with a state community college or
19 university. Before August 1, 1985, all independent
20 institutions subject to this provision shall have an
21 opportunity to participate in preliminary testing activities
22 similar to those afforded the public institutions before the
23 initiation of formal testing; and the independent sector shall
24 be afforded appropriate representation on all committees and
25 commissions charged with responsibilities for developing,
26 administering, and evaluating the tests.

27
28 Planning and development shall be in accordance with the
29 foregoing objective and policies.

30 Section 11. This act shall take effect July 1, 1997.

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HOUSE SUMMARY

Revises qualifications for designation as a Florida Academic Scholar. Revises and restructures requirements for various postsecondary scholarship award programs, relating to designation and amount of awards, eligibility and renewal requirements, and funding sources. See bill for details.