

By the Committee on Education and Senator Sullivan

304-2153-00

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to the Florida Education Fund;
3 amending s. 240.498, F.S.; providing minimum
4 requirements for support services provided
5 through the law school scholarship program;
6 authorizing the provision of awards to
7 part-time students; providing for establishment
8 of the amount of an award for a part-time
9 student; providing a guarantee of enrollment of
10 a certain number of award recipients, provided
11 certain requirements are met; revising services
12 provided as part of the minority pre-law
13 scholarship loan program; limiting
14 administrative costs of the legal education
15 component of the Florida Education Fund;
16 providing an effective date.

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

19 Section 1. Subsection (8) of section 240.498, Florida
20 Statutes, is amended to read:

21 240.498 Florida Education Fund.--

22 (8) There is created a legal education component of
23 the Florida Education Fund to provide the opportunity for
24 minorities to attain representation within the legal
25 profession proportionate to their representation within the
26 general population. The legal education component of the
27 Florida Education Fund includes a law school program and a
28 pre-law program.

29 (a) The law school scholarship program of the Florida
30 Education Fund is to be administered by the Board of Directors
31 of the Florida Education Fund for the purpose of increasing by

1 200 the number of minority students enrolled in law schools in
2 this state. Implementation of this program is to be phased in
3 over a 3-year period.

4 1. The board of directors shall provide financial,
5 academic, and other support to students selected for
6 participation in this program from funds appropriated by the
7 Legislature. Support services shall include, at a minimum: a
8 beginning law scholars' orientation, first-year student campus
9 meetings, a law scholars' annual meeting, a resume directory,
10 bar examination passage support, and supplemental bar
11 examination preparation clinics.

12 2. Student selection must be made in accordance with
13 rules adopted by the board of directors for that purpose and
14 must be based, at least in part, on an assessment of potential
15 for success, merit, and financial need.

16 3. Awards may be made available to part-time students.
17 To be eligible to participate in the program, a student must
18 take the minimum number of credit hours required by the board
19 of directors. The board of directors shall provide for a
20 scholarship awarded to a part-time student to be in an amount
21 in proportion to the award for full-time students. All program
22 requirements, including academic performance standards and
23 postgraduation restrictions, shall apply to both part-time and
24 full-time students who are award recipients.

25 4. Each accredited law school in Florida shall be
26 guaranteed three law school scholarship recipients per year.
27 Law schools experiencing a decrease in the number of enrolled
28 African-American or Hispanic students during 3 consecutive
29 years will lose their guaranteed law scholarship recipients.

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1 ~~5.3.~~ Support must be made available to students who
2 enroll in private, as well as public, law schools in this
3 state which are accredited by the American Bar Association.

4 ~~6.4.~~ Scholarships must be paid directly to the
5 participating students.

6 ~~7.5.~~ Students who participate in this program must
7 agree in writing to sit for The Florida Bar examination and,
8 upon successful admission to The Florida Bar, to either
9 practice law in the state for a period of time equal to the
10 amount of time for which the student received aid, up to 3
11 years, or repay the amount of aid received. A student who
12 practices law for 2 years as an employee of a state attorney,
13 a public defender, or the Office of the Attorney General has
14 satisfied the repayment provision of the law scholarship
15 program.

16 ~~8.6.~~ Annually the board of directors shall compile a
17 report that includes a description of the selection process,
18 an analysis of the academic progress of all scholarship
19 recipients, and an analysis of expenditures. This report must
20 be submitted to the President of the Senate, the Speaker of
21 the House of Representatives, and the Governor.

22 (b) The minority pre-law scholarship loan program of
23 the Florida Education Fund is to be administered by the Board
24 of Directors of the Florida Education Fund for the purpose of
25 increasing the opportunity of minority students to prepare for
26 law school.

27 1. From funds appropriated by the Legislature, the
28 board of directors shall provide for student fees, Law School
29 Admission Test preparation course tuition, and a pre-law
30 summer program to be held at one American Bar Association
31 accredited law school in Florida annually ~~room, board, books,~~

1 ~~supplies, and academic and other support~~ to selected minority
2 undergraduate students matriculating at eligible public and
3 independent colleges and universities in Florida.

4 2. Student selection must be made in accordance with
5 rules adopted by the board of directors for that purpose and
6 must be based, at least in part, on an assessment of potential
7 for success, merit, and financial need.

8 3. To be eligible, a student must make a written
9 agreement to enter or be accepted to enter a law school in
10 this state within 2 years after graduation or repay the
11 scholarship loan amount plus interest at the prevailing rate.

12 4. Recipients who fail to gain admission to a law
13 school within the specified period of time, may, upon
14 admission to law school, be eligible to have their loans
15 canceled.

16 5. Minority pre-law scholarship loans shall be
17 provided to 34 minority students per year for up to 4 years
18 each, for a total of 136 scholarship loans. To continue
19 receipt of scholarship loans, recipients must maintain a 2.75
20 grade point average for the freshman year and a 3.25 grade
21 point average thereafter. Participants must also take
22 specialized courses to enhance competencies in English and
23 logic.

24 6. The board of directors shall maintain records on
25 all scholarship loan recipients. Participating institutions
26 shall submit academic progress reports to the board of
27 directors following each academic term. Annually, the board of
28 directors shall compile a report that includes a description
29 of the selection process, an analysis of the academic progress
30 of all scholarship loan recipients, and an analysis of
31 expenditures. This report must be submitted to the President

1 of the Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives,
2 and the Governor.

3 (c) The allowable administrative costs for the legal
4 education component of the Florida Education Fund shall not
5 exceed 10 percent of the total funds appropriated by the
6 Legislature for the legal education component of the Florida
7 Education Fund.

8 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000.

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10 STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN
11 COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR
12 SB 2454

13 Committee Substitute for Senate Bill 2454:

14 Increases and specifies services required for the law school
15 program and the pre-law program administered by the Florida
Education Fund.

16 Raises the limit for administrative costs to 10 percent of the
17 total program expenditures.

18 For the law school program, the bill also:

19 Authorizes scholarships for part-time students.

20 Allocates at least three scholarships per year to each of the
21 state's accredited law schools, so long as they maintain at
least their current enrollment of minority students over a 3
year period.

22 Allows the scholarship loan to be repaid 1 year faster by
23 practicing law as an employee of a state attorney, public
defender, or the Attorney General.

24 For the pre-law program, the bill requires payment for Law
25 School Admission Test preparation courses and a pre-law summer
26 program and deletes the payment for room and board, books, and
other expenses.

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