

By the Committees on Education; Governmental Oversight and Productivity; and Senators Lawson and Brown-Waite

304-2313-02

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A bill to be entitled  
An act relating to education and training opportunities for state employees; amending s. 110.1099, F.S.; authorizing certain state employees to enroll in courses without paying matriculation fees on a space-available basis; providing for appropriation of funds to reimburse education institutions for administrative costs; defining the term "state employee"; providing duties of the Department of Education, the Auditor General and the State Comptroller; providing that the department shall request community colleges to provide evening and weekend programs; clarifying provisions and deleting obsolete provisions; providing an effective date.

WHEREAS, space-available tuition waivers have been offered to Florida's state employees as an important benefit to allow productive employees an opportunity to enhance their education, and

WHEREAS, valued and valuable employees, and potential employees, have always considered space-available tuition waivers to be of tremendous benefit, and

WHEREAS, one of the most effective methods for accomplishing tasks more efficiently is to provide access to education and training, and

WHEREAS, with fewer employees handling more tasks, education and training provide avenues to meet these challenges, enhance performance, and reward outstanding productivity, and

1 WHEREAS, the results of this benefit will be a more  
2 educated, well-rounded, productive, driven, appreciative, and  
3 efficient workforce, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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7 Section 1. Subsections (1), (2), and (5) of section  
8 110.1099, Florida Statutes, are amended to read:

9 110.1099 Education and training opportunities for  
10 state employees.--

11 (1)(a) Education and training are an integral  
12 component in improving the delivery of services to the public.  
13 Recognizing that the application of productivity-enhancing  
14 technology and practice demands continuous educational and  
15 training opportunities, a state employee may be authorized to  
16 receive a voucher or grant, for matriculation fees, to attend  
17 work-related courses at public community colleges, public  
18 technical centers, or public universities or colleges. A state  
19 employee receiving a voucher or grant shall not be required to  
20 pay any other fees assessed for enrollment in a work-related  
21 course. ~~Student credit hours generated by state employee fee~~  
22 ~~waivers shall be fundable credit hours.~~The department may  
23 implement the provisions of this paragraph ~~section~~ from funds  
24 appropriated to the department for this purpose. In the event  
25 insufficient funds are appropriated to the department, each  
26 state agency may supplement these funds to support the  
27 training and education needs of its employees from funds  
28 appropriated to the agency.

29 (b)1. As a benefit to employers and employees of the  
30 state, subject to the approval of an employee's agency head, a  
31 state employee who is not employed by a public university or

1 college may enroll without paying matriculation fees for up to  
2 6 credit hours of courses per term on a space-available basis  
3 at a public community college or public university or college  
4 without paying matriculation fees or any other fees assessed  
5 for enrollment in a course. In order to be eligible for this  
6 benefit, the state employee must comply with the minimum  
7 requirements of the institution attended, both as to  
8 discipline and scholarship. From funds appropriated by the  
9 Legislature for implementation of this paragraph, public  
10 community colleges and public universities and colleges shall  
11 be reimbursed for administrative costs on a pro rata basis  
12 according to cost-assessment data developed by the Department  
13 of Education.

14 2. The State Comptroller, or his or her successor, in  
15 cooperation with the public community colleges and public  
16 universities and colleges, shall ease the administrative  
17 burden on the individual institutions by facilitating the  
18 verification of state employment.

19 3. The Auditor General shall include a review of the  
20 cost-assessment data in conjunction with his or her audit  
21 responsibilities for the Department of Education.

22 (c) For purposes of this section, the term "state  
23 employee" means all persons who are full-time or part-time  
24 employees of the legislative, judicial, or executive branches  
25 of state government, except those persons who are employed by  
26 a public university or college.

27 ~~(b) For the 2001-2002 fiscal year only and~~  
28 ~~notwithstanding the provisions of paragraph (a), state~~  
29 ~~employees may not be authorized to receive fundable tuition~~  
30 ~~waivers on a space-available basis. This paragraph expires~~  
31 ~~July 1, 2002.~~

1           (2) The department, in conjunction with the agencies,  
2 shall request that public community colleges and public  
3 universities and colleges provide evening and weekend programs  
4 for state employees. When evening and weekend training and  
5 educational programs are not available, an employee may be  
6 authorized to take paid time off during his or her regular  
7 working hours for training and career development, as provided  
8 in s. 110.105(1), if such training benefits the employer as  
9 determined by that employee's agency head.

10           (5) The Department of Management Services, in  
11 consultation with the agencies and, to the extent applicable,  
12 with Florida's public community colleges, public technical  
13 centers, and public universities and colleges, shall adopt  
14 rules to administer this section.

15           Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2002.

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17                           STATEMENT OF SUBSTANTIAL CHANGES CONTAINED IN  
18   COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE FOR  
19   CS for Senate Bill 1356

20 State employees receiving vouchers or grants for matriculation  
21 fees for work related courses taken at public community  
22 colleges, colleges, or universities are not to be charged  
23 additional enrollment fees for the courses. In addition, state  
24 employees taking courses on a space available basis at public  
25 postsecondary institutions are not to be charged matriculation  
26 or other enrollment fees.

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28 For purposes of the bill, state employees are defined as  
29 employees of the legislative, judicial, or executive branches  
30 of government. Employees of public colleges or universities  
31 are not included in the definition.