

SENATE STAFF ANALYSIS AND ECONOMIC IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

BILL: CS/SB 638

SPONSOR: Senator Clary

SUBJECT: Student Tuition Assistance

DATE: April 10, 2003

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	<u>Woodruff</u>	<u>O'Farrell</u>	<u>ED</u>	<u>Favorable</u>
2.	<u>Bryant</u>	<u>Newman</u>	<u>AED</u>	<u>Favorable/CS</u>
3.	_____	_____	<u>AP</u>	_____
4.	_____	_____	_____	_____
5.	_____	_____	_____	_____
6.	_____	_____	_____	_____

I. Summary:

This bill creates the Access to Better Learning and Education Grant Program. The grant program would be limited to Florida resident students seeking a baccalaureate degree from a for-profit college or university that: is accredited by the Commission on Colleges of the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools; grants baccalaureate degrees; is located in and chartered by the state; and has a secular purpose.

The annual amount of the grant would be established in the General Appropriations Act. The grant program would not be related to a student's need for financial assistance.

This bill creates a new section of the Florida Statutes.

The CS clarifies that the grant program is to be implemented only to the extent funded specifically by law. Further, schools chartered out of state may participate in the program only if located in Florida for 10 years or more including non-profit accredited institutions. These facilities are eligible only in the second year of funding for the program.

II. Present Situation:

Florida does not offer access grants to attend for-profit colleges and universities to students who are residents of Florida. Currently, students attending two institutions would qualify for the new grants. Those institutions are South University in West Palm Beach and Keiser College. One additional for-profit institution is in the process of becoming qualified to offer baccalaureate degrees. That institution is Miami University of Arts and Design.

The estimated number of Florida resident students at South University seeking a baccalaureate degree is 127 for the 2002-2003 academic year. For Keiser College, the estimate is 35 resident students.

Florida does offer access grants to resident students to attend nonprofit colleges and universities. This program is the Florida Resident Access Grants (FRAG) program. For 2002-2003, the total funding for the FRAG in the General Appropriations Act was \$79,841,350. This amount was to support 29,725 students at \$2,686 per student.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

A new tuition assistance program would be created for Florida resident students. Students attending institutions which are: for-profit; accredited; baccalaureate degree granting; located in or chartered by the state; and which have a secular purpose, would be eligible for the grant.

The total funding level and the amount per student would be specified in the General Appropriations Act each year.

The CS clarifies that the grant program is to be implemented only to the extent funded specifically by law. Further, schools chartered out of state may participate in the program only if located in Florida for 10 years or more including non-profit accredited institutions. These facilities are eligible only in the second year of funding for the program.

The effective date of the bill is upon becoming law.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Economic Impact and Fiscal Note:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

The grant would provide funding to students attending baccalaureate degree granting, for-profit colleges and universities, thereby reducing the total cost to the student to be provided from other sources.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The bill creates a new program to be funded with state resources. At the current level of support for the Florida Resident Access Grant of \$2,686 per student, the cost to the state to implement the program in the current year would have been \$435,132 (162 students).

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Amendments:

None.

This Senate staff analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's sponsor or the Florida Senate.
