

By Senator Wise

5-1553-07

1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to postsecondary education;
3 creating s. 1009.893, F.S.; creating the
4 Workforce Education Grant Program to provide
5 grants to students enrolled in degree programs
6 in nonpublic educational institutions;
7 providing legislative intent with respect to
8 workforce education; prescribing eligibility
9 criteria for such students; defining the term
10 "eligible nonpublic institution of higher
11 education"; directing the State Board of
12 Education to adopt rules; providing an
13 effective date.

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

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17 Section 1. Section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, is
18 created to read:

19 1009.893 Workforce Education Grant Program.--

20 (1) The Legislature finds and declares that workforce
21 education programs are a critical component of the state's
22 educational system and that it is in the state's interest to
23 promote student choice, responsiveness of postsecondary
24 institutions to students' needs, and the relevance of
25 educational programs to the state's economic development needs
26 across all sectors of the state's postsecondary education
27 system. The Legislature further finds that nonpublic
28 institutions eligible to participate in the Workforce
29 Education Grant Program are an integral part of the higher
30 education system in this state and that the Workforce
31 Education Grant Program will help meet the state's interests

1 in regard to workforce education and promote consistency in
2 its support of workforce education. The Legislature intends to
3 create a grant program that is not based on a student's
4 financial need or other criteria upon which financial aid
5 programs are based but is a tuition assistance program for
6 state residents.

7 (2) There is created the Workforce Education Grant
8 Program, or WEG Program, to be administered by the Department
9 of Education.

10 (3) Subject to legislative appropriation, the
11 department shall issue a grant under the WEG Program to any
12 student who:

13 (a) Meets the residency requirement provided in s.
14 1009.40.

15 (b) Is enrolled as a full-time undergraduate student
16 in a Florida-campus-based program at an eligible nonpublic
17 institution of higher education and is seeking an associate or
18 higher degree.

19 (c) Is enrolled in an undergraduate degree program
20 that leads to employment in occupations that are consistent
21 with the workforce needs of employers and economic development
22 strategies of the state as listed on the Agency for Workforce
23 Innovation's Florida Statewide Targeted Occupations List or on
24 a regional targeted occupations list of a Florida workforce
25 board at the time of enrollment.

26 (4) As used in this section, the term "eligible
27 nonpublic institution of higher education" means an
28 institution:

29 (a) That is licensed by the Commission for Independent
30 Education under chapter 1005.

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1 (b) That is accredited by an accrediting agency that
2 is recognized by the United States Secretary of Education as a
3 reliable authority as to the quality of education or training
4 offered at its accredited institutions.

5 (c) That meets performance requirements for student
6 achievement which include minimum objective quantitative
7 standards, including completion rates and placement rates, as
8 established by its recognized accrediting agency set forth in
9 paragraph (b) or by the Commission for Independent Education.

10 (d) Whose students are eligible to participate in the
11 Access to Better Learning and Education Grant Program and the
12 William L. Boyd, IV, Florida Resident Access Grant Program.

13 (5) The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
14 pursuant to ss. 120.53(1) and 120.54 to administer the WEG
15 Program.

16 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2007.

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19 SENATE SUMMARY

20 Creates the Workforce Education Grant Program under which
21 the Department of Education will provide grants to
22 degree-seeking students enrolled in undergraduate degree
23 programs at certain nonpublic educational institutions
24 which lead to employment in occupations that are
25 consistent with workforce needs of employers and economic
26 development strategies of the state.
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