

1                                   A bill to be entitled  
 2           An act relating to independent postsecondary  
 3           educational grants; creating s. 1009.8911, F.S.;  
 4           authorizing the Department of Education to award  
 5           grants to students enrolled at certain colleges and  
 6           universities; providing requirements for such colleges  
 7           and universities; providing that such colleges and  
 8           universities are not under the jurisdiction of the  
 9           Commission for Independent Education; providing an  
 10          effective date.

11  
 12   Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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 14           Section 1.   Section 1009.8911, Florida Statutes, is created  
 15   to read:

16           1009.8911 Educational grants to students enrolled in  
 17 independent nonprofit colleges and universities.-

18           (1) Subject to legislative funding:

19           (a) The Department of Education shall issue a grant  
 20 pursuant to s. 1009.89 to any full-time, degree-seeking  
 21 undergraduate student who is registered at an independent  
 22 nonprofit college or university that meets all of the following  
 23 criteria:

24           1. Was eligible for the Access to Better Learning and  
 25 Education Grant Program as of January 1, 2021.

26        2. Has been located in the state for more than 20 years.

27        3. Offers at least one nursing program at its campus,  
 28 including practical nursing programs, registered nursing  
 29 programs, or advanced practice registered nursing programs, and  
 30 is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

31        4. Has a secular purpose. The receipt of state aid by  
 32 students at the college or university may not have the primary  
 33 effect of advancing or impeding religion, or result in an  
 34 excessive entanglement between the state and any religious sect.

35        5. Has notified the department in writing of its decision  
 36 to apply for the grant no later than September 1, 2023.

37        6. Except for s. 1009.89(1) and (3), complies with all  
 38 other requirements provided in s. 1009.89.

39        (b) The department shall issue a grant pursuant to s.  
 40 1009.89 to any full-time, degree-seeking undergraduate student  
 41 who is registered at an independent for-profit college or  
 42 university that meets all of the following criteria:

43        1. Has a level 6 accreditation from the Southern  
 44 Association of Colleges and Schools Commission on Colleges.

45        2. Is located in and chartered by the state.

46        3. Was licensed by the department on or before October 1,  
 47 2021.

48        4. Has a secular purpose. The receipt of state aid by  
 49 students at the college or university may not have the primary  
 50 effect of advancing or impeding religion, or result in an

51 excessive entanglement between the state and any religious sect.

52 5. Has notified the department in writing of its decision  
 53 to apply for the grant no later than September 1, 2023.

54 6. Except for s. 1009.89(1) and (3), complies with all  
 55 other requirements provided in s. 1009.89.

56  
 57 An eligible college or university under this subsection may not  
 58 be a state university or Florida College System institution.

59 (2) Notwithstanding any other law to the contrary, an  
 60 eligible college or university applying for a grant under this  
 61 section is outside the jurisdiction of, and is not subject to  
 62 licensure by, the Commission for Independent Education.

63 Section 2. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.