

By Senator Thompson

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1 A bill to be entitled
2 An act relating to Groveland Four business loans and
3 scholarships; amending s. 288.7102, F.S.; requiring
4 the Department of Economic Opportunity to prioritize
5 certain applications for the Black Business Loan
6 Program; creating s. 1009.551, F.S.; creating the
7 Groveland Four Scholarship Program for specified
8 recipients; directing the Department of Education to
9 administer the program; specifying annual award
10 amounts to students participating in the program;
11 requiring the department to rank applicants; providing
12 for transmittal of an award payment to a participating
13 postsecondary institution; prescribing eligibility
14 criteria for award recipients; authorizing the State
15 Board of Education to adopt rules; providing for
16 program funding; providing an effective date.

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

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20 Section 1. Subsection (2) of section 288.7102, Florida
21 Statutes, is amended to read:

22 288.7102 Black Business Loan Program.—

23 (2) The department shall establish an application and
24 annual certification process for entities seeking funds to
25 participate in providing loans, loan guarantees, or investments
26 in black business enterprises pursuant to the Florida Black
27 Business Investment Act. The department shall process all
28 applications and recertifications submitted by June 1 on or
29 before July 31. The department shall prioritize any applications

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30 for black business enterprises in areas directly impacted by the
31 Groveland Four injustice.

32 Section 2. Section 1009.551, Florida Statutes, is created
33 to read:

34 1009.551 Groveland Four Scholarship Program.—

35 (1) The Groveland Four Scholarship Program is created for
36 the direct descendants of victims of the Groveland Four
37 injustice which occurred in July 1949 and for current African-
38 American residents of Groveland.

39 (2) The Groveland Four Scholarship Program shall be
40 administered by the Department of Education.

41 (3) The annual award to a student under the program may be
42 an amount of up to \$6,100, but may not exceed the annual amount
43 of the student's tuition and registration fees. The department
44 may award up to 50 scholarships per academic year. If funds are
45 insufficient to provide a full scholarship to each eligible
46 applicant, the department may prorate available funds and make a
47 partial award to each eligible applicant.

48 (4) The department shall rank eligible initial applicants
49 for the purposes of awarding scholarships based on need, as
50 determined by the department.

51 (5) Payment of an award must be transmitted in advance of
52 the registration period each semester on behalf of the student
53 to the president of the state university or Florida College
54 System institution, or his or her representative, or to the
55 director of the career center that the recipient is attending.

56 (6) Beginning with the 2023-2024 academic year, the
57 department is authorized to make awards for undergraduate study
58 to students who do all of the following:

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59 (a) Meet the general requirements for student eligibility
60 as provided in s. 1009.40, except as otherwise provided in this
61 section.

62 (b) File an application for the scholarship within the
63 established time limits, as determined by the department.

64 (c) Enroll as certificate-seeking or degree-seeking
65 students at a state university, Florida College System
66 institution, or career center authorized by law.

67 (7) The State Board of Education may adopt any rules
68 necessary to implement and administer this section.

69 (8) Funding for the program must be as provided in the
70 General Appropriations Act.

71 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2023.