

By Senator Thompson

15-00325-24

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1                   A bill to be entitled  
2           An act relating to the 1920 Ocoee Election Day Riots;  
3           amending s. 288.7102, F.S.; requiring the Department  
4           of Commerce to prioritize certain applications for the  
5           Black Business Loan Program; creating s. 1009.551,  
6           F.S.; creating the Ocoee Scholarship Program for  
7           specified recipients; requiring the Department of  
8           Education to administer the program; specifying limits  
9           on annual award amounts to recipients participating in  
10          the program; requiring the department to rank  
11          applicants; providing for transmittal of an award  
12          payment to a participating institution; providing  
13          eligibility criteria for award recipients; authorizing  
14          the State Board of Education to adopt rules; providing  
15          for program funding; providing an effective date.

16  
17 Be It Enacted by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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

21           288.7102 Black Business Loan Program.—

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

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30 1920 Ocoee Election Day Riots.

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

33 1009.551 Ocoee Scholarship Program.—

34 (1) The Ocoee Scholarship Program is created for the direct  
35 descendants of victims of the Ocoee Election Day Riots in  
36 November 1920 and for current African-American residents of  
37 Ocoee.

38 (2) The Department of Education shall administer the  
39 program.

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

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

50 (5) Payment of an award must be transmitted in advance of  
51 the registration period each semester on behalf of the student  
52 to the president of the accredited college or university, or his  
53 or her representative, or to the director of the career center  
54 the recipient is attending.

55 (6) Beginning with the 2024-2025 academic year, the  
56 department may make awards under the program for undergraduate  
57 study to students who meet all of the following criteria:

58 (a) Meet the general requirements for student eligibility

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59 as provided in s. 1009.40, except as otherwise provided in this  
60 section.

61 (b) Timely file an application for the scholarship.

62 (c) Enroll as certificate-seeking or degree-seeking  
63 students at an accredited college or university or a career  
64 center authorized by law.

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

67 (8) Funding for the program shall be as provided in the  
68 General Appropriations Act.

69 Section 3. This act shall take effect July 1, 2024.