**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑104‑20, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE PALMETTO FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM, SECTION 59‑149‑10, RELATING TO LEGISLATIVE INCENTIVES FOR FUTURE EXCELLENCE (LIFE) SCHOLARSHIPS, AND SECTION 59‑150‑370, AS AMENDED, RELATING TO HOPE SCHOLARSHIPS, ALL SO AS TO INCREASE MAXIMUM AMOUNTS AVAILABLE UNDER THESE SCHOLARSHIPS BY TEN PERCENT.

Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the State of South Carolina:

SECTION 1. Section 59‑104‑20(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) The Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Program is established to foster scholarship among the state’s post‑secondary students and retain outstanding South Carolina high school graduates in the State through awards based on scholarship and achievement. Measures must be taken to ensure equitable minority participation in this program. Recipients of these scholarships are designated Palmetto Fellows. Each Palmetto Fellow shall receive a scholarship in an amount not to exceed ~~six thousand seven hundred~~ seven thousand three hundred seventy dollars. These scholarships in combination with all other grants and scholarships shall not exceed the cost of attendance at the institution attended. The commission shall promulgate regulations and establish procedures to administer the program and request annual state appropriations for the program.”

SECTION 2. Section 59‑149‑10(E) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(E)(1) Beginning with school year ~~2002‑2003~~ 2016‑2017, the annual amount of a LIFE Scholarship for eligible resident students attending a four‑year public or independent institution as defined in this chapter is increased to the cost of tuition for thirty credit hours a year or its equivalent plus a three hundred dollar a year book allowance. Tuition for this purpose means the amount charged for registering for credit hours of instruction and shall not include other fees, charges, or costs of textbooks, except for the referenced three hundred dollar book allowance, and may not exceed ~~four~~ five thousand ~~seven~~ one hundred seventy dollars for each student for each year, plus the book allowance.

(2) In addition, and notwithstanding the provisions of subsection (D) above, beginning with school year 2002‑2003, eligible resident students attending two‑year independent institutions may not receive an annual LIFE scholarship of more than the maximum cost of tuition at two‑year regional public institutions for thirty credit hours a year or its equivalent. An eligible student attending a two‑year public or independent institution or technical college shall receive the three hundred dollar book allowance in addition to his cost of tuition.”

SECTION 3. Section 59‑150‑370(A) of the 1976 Code, as last amended by Act 115 of 2007, is further amended to read:

“(A) SC HOPE Scholarships are hereby established and are provided by the State. These scholarships are authorized in an amount of up to two thousand ~~five~~ seven hundred fifty dollars, plus a three hundred dollar book allowance to cover the cost of attendance, as defined by the Commission on Higher Education by regulation, during the first year of attendance only, to an eligible student attending a four‑year public or independent institution as defined in subsection (B) who does not also qualify for a LIFE Scholarship or a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship.”

SECTION 4. The provisions of this act take effect July 1, 2016.

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