~~Indicates Matter Stricken~~

Indicates New Matter

AMENDED

April 8, 2021

**H. 3588**

Introduced by Reps. Allison, Felder and Carter

S. Printed 4/8/21--H.

Read the first time January 12, 2021.

**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑149‑50, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE CRITERIA FOR LIFE SCHOLARSHIPS, SO AS TO STRENGTHEN ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS, AND COMPUTER SCIENCE FOUNDATIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS SEEKING LIFE SCHOLARSHIPS BY REQUIRING SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF CERTAIN ENGLISH AND MATHEMATICS OR COMPUTER SCIENCE COURSEWORK DURING THEIR SENIOR YEARS, AND TO EXCLUDE MEMBERS OF THE 2022‑2023 SENIOR CLASS FROM THESE REQUIREMENTS.

Amend Title To Conform

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

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

“(H) Notwithstanding another provision of law, a student who met the initial eligibility requirements to receive a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Award as a senior in high school and has met the continuing eligibility requirements shall receive the award. A student who received a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Award as a senior in high school but declined the award is eligible to reapply for the annual scholarship, providing he meets all of the initial and continuing academic eligibility requirements of the Palmetto Fellows program, if he transfers to a qualifying South Carolina institution of higher learning. The number of semesters or academic years a student attended an out‑of‑state institution are to be deducted from the number of semesters or academic years a student is eligible for the scholarship. All funding provided for Palmetto Fellows Scholarships regardless of its source or allocation must be used to implement the provisions of this subsection. A student who uses a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship to attend an eligible two‑year institution shall receive a maximum of four continuous semesters, and may continue to use the scholarship to attend an eligible four‑year institution, subject to the maximum number of semesters for which the student may be eligible for the scholarship.”

SECTION 2. Section 59‑149‑50(A) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(A) To be eligible for a LIFE Scholarship, a student must be either a student who has graduated from a high school located in this State having earned at least one unit of credit in mathematics or computer science and one unit of credit in English/language arts which may be accomplished by dual enrollment during the senior year beginning July 1, 2025, a student who has completed at least three of the final four years of high school within this State, a home school student who has successfully completed a high school home school program in this State in the manner required by law, a student who has graduated from a preparatory high school outside this State, while a dependent of a parent or guardian who is a legal resident of this State and has custody of the dependent, or a student whose parent or guardian has served in or has retired from one of the United States Armed Forces within the last four years, paid income taxes in this State for a majority of the years of service, and is a resident of this State. These students also must meet the requirements of subsection (B) and be eligible for in‑state tuition and fees as determined pursuant to Chapter 112, Title 59 and applicable regulations. In addition, the student must have graduated from high school with a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative grade average on a 4.0 scale and have scored 1100 or better on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or ~~have the equivalent ACT score~~ 22 on the ACT; provided that, if the student is to attend such a public or independent two‑year college or university in this State, including a technical college, the SAT/ACT requirement does not apply. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 or greater are exempt from having to take a unit of credit in mathematics or computer science and a unit of credit in English/language arts during their senior year. If a student chooses to attend such a public or independent institution of this State and does not make the required SAT/ACT score or the required high school grade point average, as applicable, the student may earn a LIFE Scholarship after his freshman year if he meets the grade point average and semester credit hour requirements of subsection (B). For the purpose of meeting the rank criteria pursuant to this section, the existing high school rank of a South Carolina resident attending an out‑of‑state high school may be used provided it is calculated pursuant to a state‑approved, standardized grading scale at the respective out‑of‑state high school. If the Commission on Higher Education determines that a state‑approved standardized grading scale substantially deviates from the South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale, the state‑approved standardized grading scale shall not be used to meet the eligibility requirements for the LIFE Scholarship.”

SECTION 3. Section 59‑149‑50 of the 1976 Code is amended by adding an appropriately lettered subsection to read:

“( ) Verification of a student earning at least one unit of credit in mathematics or computer science and one unit of English/language arts during the senior year of high school as required by subsection (A) must be evidenced by an easily identifiable and uniform notation developed by the State Department of Education in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education. This notation must be prominently included on an eligible student’s official high school transcript.”

SECTION 4. Section 59‑150‑370(C) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(C) A student is eligible to receive a SC HOPE Scholarship if he meets the criteria for receiving and maintaining the Legislative Incentives for Future Excellence (LIFE) Scholarship, including having earned at least one unit of credit in mathematics or computer science and one unit of credit in English/language arts which may be accomplished by dual enrollment during the senior year beginning July 1, 2025, unless the student as a cumulative grade point average of 4.0 or higher, except that a minimum Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or ACT score and requisite class rank are not required for eligibility for the SC HOPE Scholarship. These SC HOPE Scholarships must be granted and awarded as provided in this section.”

SECTION 5. In the event that the SAT or ACT changes their respective scoring ranges, the Commission on Higher Education shall adjust the minimum scores required by this chapter in order to ensure equivalency.

SECTION 6. The provisions of this SECTION do not apply to students in the senior class of the 2024‑2025 School Year.

SECTION 7. This act takes effect July 1, 2023.

‑‑‑‑XX‑‑‑‑