**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑149‑15, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO THE ADDITIONAL LIFE SCHOLARSHIP STIPEND, SO AS TO AWARD THE ADDITIONAL STIPEND TO A QUALIFIED STUDENT MAJORING IN EDUCATION; AND TO AMEND SECTION 59‑104‑25, RELATING TO THE ADDITIONAL PALMETTO FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP STIPEND, SO AS TO AWARD THE ADDITIONAL STIPEND TO A QUALIFIED STUDENT MAJORING IN EDUCATION.

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

SECTION 1. Section 59‑149‑15(A) and (B) of the 1976 Code are amended to read:

“(A)A resident student who is at least a sophomore attending a four‑year public or private institution of higher learning in this State, who is majoring in education, science, or mathematics as defined below, and who is receiving a LIFE Scholarship for the current year, shall receive an additional LIFE Scholarship stipend equal to the cost of attendance after applying all other scholarships or grants, not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars each year for no more than three additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a four‑year degree program, or for not more than four additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a five‑year degree program or a 3 plus 2 program. In addition, during his freshman year, the student majoring in science or mathematics must have successfully completed a total of at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics courses, or life and physical science courses, or a combination of both. A year is defined as thirty credit hours of instruction or its equivalent each year. To receive the additional LIFE Scholarship stipend each year, the student must receive the underlying LIFE Scholarship for that year and must be making acceptable progress each year toward receiving a degree in his education, science, or mathematics major. For purposes of meeting the required minimum level of instruction in mathematics and life and physical science courses during a student’s freshman year, advanced placement courses in mathematics and life and physical sciences taken in high school on which the student scored high enough on the advanced placement test to receive credit at his institution and for which he received credit, count toward the fulfillment of this minimum requirement.

(B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major but at a minimum shall include majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, science education, math education, and health care and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. The Commission on Higher Education shall by regulation define what constitutes an education major and shall set forth eligibility criteria that the student must meet to receive a LIFE Scholarship stipend. Additionally, the Commission on Higher Education annually shall communicate with high school guidance counselors regarding the list of qualifying majors.”

SECTION 2. Section 59‑104‑25(A) and (B) of the 1976 Code are amended to read:

“(A) A resident student who is at least a sophomore attending a four‑year public or private institution of higher learning in this State, who is majoring in education, science, or mathematics as defined below, and who is receiving a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship for the current year, shall receive an additional Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend equal to the cost of attendance after applying all other scholarships or grants, not to exceed three thousand three hundred dollars each year for no more than three additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if the student enrolled in a four‑year degree program, or for not more than four additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a five‑year degree program or a 3 plus 2 program. A year is defined as thirty credit hours of instruction or its equivalent each year. To receive the additional Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend each year, the student must receive the underlying Palmetto Fellows Scholarship for that year and must be making acceptable progress each year toward receiving a degree in his education, science, or mathematics major. In addition, during his freshman year, the student majoring in science or mathematics must have successfully completed a total of at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics courses, or life and physical science courses, or a combination of both. For purposes of meeting the required minimum level of instruction in mathematics and life and physical science courses during a student’s freshman year, advanced placement courses in mathematics and life and physical sciences taken in high school on which the student scored high enough on the advanced placement test to receive credit at his institution and for which he received credit, count toward the fulfillment of this minimum requirement.

(B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major but at a minimum shall include majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, science education, math education, and health care and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. The Commission on Higher Education shall by regulation define what constitutes an education major and shall set forth eligibility criteria that the student must meet to receive a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend. Additionally, the Commission on Higher Education annually shall communicate with high school guidance counselors regarding the list of qualifying majors.”

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor and first applies to the beginning of the 2023‑2024 academic term.

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