**South Carolina General Assembly**

126th Session, 2025-2026

**H. 3632**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Reps. Erickson, Spann-Wilder and Bauer

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Introduced in the House on January 14, 2025

Introduced in the Senate on April 30, 2025

Currently residing in the Senate

Summary: STEM scholarship stipends

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

 Date Body Action Description with journal page number

 12/12/2024 House Prefiled

 12/12/2024 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works**

 1/14/2025 House Introduced and read first time (House Journal‑page 272)

 1/14/2025 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works** (House Journal‑page 272)

 2/5/2025 Scrivener's error corrected

 4/8/2025 House Member(s) request name added as sponsor: Bauer

 4/24/2025 House Committee report: Favorable **Education and Public Works** (House Journal‑page 46)

 4/29/2025 House Read second time (House Journal‑page 27)

 4/29/2025 House Roll call Yeas-112 Nays-0 (House Journal‑page 27)

 4/29/2025 Scrivener's error corrected

 4/30/2025 House Read third time and sent to Senate

 4/30/2025 Senate Introduced and read first time

 4/30/2025 Senate Referred to Committee on **Education**

 4/30/2025 Senate Polled out of committee **Education**

 4/30/2025 Senate Committee report: Favorable **Education**

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/12/2024](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3632_20241212.docx)

[02/05/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3632_20250205.docx)

[04/24/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3632_20250424.docx)

[04/29/2025](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess126_2025-2026/prever/3632_20250429.docx)

Indicates Matter Stricken

Indicates New Matter

Committee Report

April 24, 2025

H. 3632

Introduced by Reps. Erickson, Spann-Wilder and Bauer

S. Printed 4/24/25--H. [SEC 4/29/2025 9:54 PM]

Read the first time January 14, 2025

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The committee on House Education and Public Works

To whom was referred a Bill (H. 3632) to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by amending Section 59-149-15, relating to requirements for additional LIFE Scholarship stipends, and Section 59-104-25, etc., respectfully

Report:

That they have duly and carefully considered the same, and recommend that the same do pass:

SHANNON ERICKSON for Committee.

statement of estimated fiscal impact

Explanation of Fiscal Impact

State Expenditure

This bill provides that courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics must count towards eligibility requirements for accounting majors to receive the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship enhancements, beginning with accounting majors who were freshmen in the 2024-2025 academic year. Currently, LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship recipients completing a major in an approved Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math (STEM) field, including accounting, must successfully complete 14 credit hours of approved science or math coursework in their first year in order to receive the scholarship enhancement of $2,500 per academic year in up to three subsequent years. Eligible STEM majors as well as courses that are eligible to count towards the 14-credit hour requirement must be approved by CHE.

Act 156 of 2024 added accounting majors to the approved majors eligible to receive the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship enhancement, with students eligible to receive the stipend beginning in the Fall of 2024 provided that the freshman math or science coursework requirements had been met. According to preliminary data provided by CHE, there were 517 sophomore, junior, or senior accounting majors receiving the base LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship statewide in the Fall of 2024. Of these students, 16, or approximately 3 percent, received the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship enhancement. As the courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics applied to the 14-credit hour requirement could account for 9 credit hours per student, we anticipate that this will materially increase the number of students majoring in accounting eligible to receive the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship enhancement. As the bill is effective beginning with students who were freshmen in the 2024-2025 academic year, the initial impact will be limited to eligible sophomores in the 2025-26 academic year and will increase as additional cohorts of accounting majors become eligible for the scholarship enhancement.

Based on the current number of accounting majors receiving base scholarship awards provided by CHE, this bill is expected to increase LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend disbursements by up to $328,000 in FY 2025-26, $730,000 in FY 2026-27, and $1,253,000 beginning in FY 2027-28. This estimate assumes all accounting majors who currently receive either the LIFE or Palmetto Fellows Scholarship will receive the stipend. The impact will vary depending on the number of scholarship recipients who choose to major in accounting in future years as well as the number of those students who meet the 14-credit hour requirement including the courses specified by the bill. For reference, in FY 2024-25, LIFE Scholarship disbursements are estimated to total $210,341,233 from Lottery funds, and Palmetto Fellows disbursements are estimated to total $75,259,863 from General Funds and Lottery funds. If Lottery funding is not available to cover the increase in the scholarship stipend disbursements in future years to eligible students under the bill, this increase would become an obligation of the General Fund.

CHE indicates that the addition of eligible courses to LIFE and Palmetto Fellows Scholarship enhancement requirements will be managed with existing staff and resources. Therefore, this bill will have no impact on CHE.

Frank A. Rainwater, Executive Director

Revenue and Fiscal Affairs Office

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A bill

TO AMEND THE SOUTH CAROLINA CODE OF LAWS BY AMENDING SECTION 59-149-15, RELATING TO requirements for ADDITIONAL LIFE SCHOLARSHIP STIPENDs, AND section 59-104-25, RELATING TO requirements for ADDITIONAL PALMETTO FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIP STIPENDs, both so as to provide that certain coursework in economics and business statistics must count towards certain required freshman year coursework in mathematics and science, and to clarify these provisions apply beginning with accounting majors who completed such coursework as freshmEn in the 2024-2025 SCHOOL YEAR.

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

SECTION 1. Section 59-149-15(B) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 (B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major, applicable beginning with the 2024-2025 School Year to persons who did not receive a LIFE Scholarship stipend before the 2024-2025 School Year. This definition of a science or mathematics major must include, at a minimum, majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, accounting, and health carehealthcare and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. For purposes of determining stipend eligibility of accounting majors, courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics completed by an accounting major in his freshman year must count towards the requirement in subsection (A) that the student shall complete at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics and science courses during the student’s freshman year, and these provisions apply beginning with students who took microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics courses as freshman accounting majors during the 2024-2025 School Year so as to enable them to have those courses count toward the fourteen-hour coursework requirement in subsection (A) for purposes of attaining LIFE Scholarship stipend eligibility.

SECTION 2. Section 59-104-25(B) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

 (B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major, applicable beginning with the 2024-2025 School Year to persons who did not receive a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend before the 2024-2025 School Year. This definition of a science or mathematics major must include, at a minimum, majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, accounting, and health care healthcare and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. For purposes of determining stipend eligibility of accounting majors, courses in microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics completed by an accounting major in his freshman year must count towards the requirement in subsection (A) that the student shall complete at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics and science courses during the student’s freshman year, and these provisions apply beginning with students who took microeconomics, macroeconomics, and business statistics courses as freshman accounting majors during the 2024-2025 School Year so as to enable them to have those courses count toward the fourteen-hour coursework requirement in subsection (A) for purposes of attaining Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend eligibility.

SECTION 3. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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