

Stricken language would be deleted from and underlined language would be added to present law.

State of Arkansas
94th General Assembly
Regular Session, 2023

As Engrossed: H2/20/23 H4/5/23
A Bill

HOUSE BILL 1417

By: Representative Lundstrum
By: Senator J. English

For An Act To Be Entitled

AN ACT TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM TO INCLUDE VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AND TECHNICAL INSTITUTES AS APPROVED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; TO ENSURE THAT CERTAIN FUNDS FROM THE HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS FUND ACCOUNT ARE EXPENDED ON STUDENTS ENROLLED IN A TECHNICAL INSTITUTE OR A VOCATIONAL-TECHNICAL SCHOOL; AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES.

Subtitle

TO AMEND THE ARKANSAS ACADEMIC CHALLENGE SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM CONCERNING APPROVED INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER EDUCATION; AND CONCERNING THE HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS FUND ACCOUNT.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

SECTION 1. Arkansas Code § 6-85-204(3), concerning the definition of an "approved institution of higher education" under the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program, is amended to read as follows:

(3)(A) "Approved institution of higher education" means an institution of higher education approved by the division to participate in the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program and that is:

~~(A)(i)~~ A state-supported two-year or four-year college or university;



~~(B)(ii)~~ A private, nonprofit two-year or four-year college or university with its primary headquarters located in Arkansas that is eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds; ~~or~~

~~(C)(iii)~~ An approved school of nursing, subject to the provisions of § 6-85-213(c);

(iv)(a) A public or private vocational-technical school.

(b) A public or private vocational-technical school shall be bonded and insured; or

(v)(a) A public or private technical institute.

(b) A public or private technical institute shall be bonded and insured.

(B) An approved institution of higher education that is a private, nonprofit two-year or four-year college or university shall be eligible to receive Title IV federal student aid funds;

SECTION 2. Arkansas Code Title 6, Chapter 85, Subchapter 2, is amended to add an additional section to read as follows:

6-85-222. Vocational-technical school and technical institute eligibility.

(a) An applicant for a scholarship under this subchapter who has applied to or is currently enrolled in a public or private vocational-technical school or a public or private technical institute shall, in addition to the relevant eligibility requirements under this subchapter, be accepted for admission in a program of study that leads to an associate degree or a certificate program in one (1) of the following high-demand fields:

(1) Industry;

(2) Health care; or

(3) Information technology.

(b) The Division of Higher Education shall file annually by November 1 a report to the Legislative Council in the manner and format that the Legislative Council requires regarding:

(1) All state-supported student financial assistance awarded by the division under this subchapter to students enrolled in vocational-technical schools and technical institutes; and

(2) The permissible high-demand fields under subsection (a) of this section, including without limitation recommendations for adding or removing a high-demand field that is considered eligible for scholarship purposes under subsection (a) of this section.

SECTION 3. Arkansas Code § 19-5-302(11), concerning the Higher Education Grants Fund Account of the State General Government Fund, is amended to read as follows:

(11) HIGHER EDUCATION GRANTS FUND ACCOUNT.

(A) The Higher Education Grants Fund Account shall be used for the:

(i) State's contribution for tuition support for Arkansas students attending out-of-state schools in dentistry, optometry, veterinary, podiatry, osteopathy, and chiropractic; and

(ii)(a) Disbursement of funds for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program, and other various scholarship, loan, and grant programs as authorized by law and administered by the Division of Higher Education or other state agencies made disbursing agents by the General Assembly from the Higher Education Grants Fund Account.

(b) Disbursement of additional funds allocated for the Arkansas Academic Challenge Scholarship Program under this subdivision (11)(A)(ii) shall account for the distribution of up to two million dollars (\$2,000,000) by the Division of Higher Education on behalf of students who are enrolled in a technical institute or a vocational-technical institute.

(B) The Higher Education Grants Fund Account shall consist of transfers from the Private Career School Student Protection Trust Fund under § 6-51-607 and those general revenues and any other funds as may be provided by law;

/s/Lundstrum