

By: Clardy

H.B. No. 653

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED

AN ACT

relating to the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant program.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF TEXAS:

SECTION 1. Section 56.402(b), Education Code, is amended to read as follows:

(b) The purpose of this subchapter is to provide a grant of money to enable eligible students to attend eligible [~~two-year public~~] institutions [~~of higher education~~] in this state.

SECTION 2. Sections 56.404(a), (c), (d), and (f), Education Code, are amended to read as follows:

(a) To be eligible initially for a grant under the grant program, a person must:

(1) be a resident of this state as determined by coordinating board rules;

(2) meet financial need requirements as defined by the coordinating board;

(3) be enrolled in an associate or baccalaureate degree program or a certificate program at an eligible institution;

(4) be enrolled as an entering student for at least one-half of a full course load for an entering student in the associate or baccalaureate degree program or a certificate program, as determined by the coordinating board;

(5) have applied for any available financial aid or assistance; and

1 (6) comply with any additional nonacademic
2 requirement adopted by the coordinating board under this
3 subchapter.

4 (c) A person is not eligible to receive a grant under this
5 subchapter if the person has been granted:

6 (1) an associate degree, if the person is enrolled in
7 an associate degree or certificate program; or

8 (2) a baccalaureate degree.

9 (d) A person may not receive a grant under this subchapter
10 for more than:

11 (1) for a person enrolled in an associate degree or
12 certificate program, 75 semester credit hours or the equivalent; or

13 (2) for a person enrolled in a baccalaureate degree
14 program, the greater of:

15 (A) 15 semester credit hours or the equivalent
16 more than the total number of semester credit hours or the
17 equivalent required by the institution for the degree program in
18 which the person is enrolled; or

19 (B) 135 semester credit hours or the equivalent.

20 (f) A person's eligibility for a grant under this subchapter
21 ends on:

22 (1) the fourth anniversary of the initial award of a
23 grant under this subchapter to the person and the person's
24 enrollment in an eligible institution, if the person is enrolled in
25 a degree or certificate program of two years or less; or

26 (2) the fifth anniversary of the initial award of a
27 grant under this subchapter to the person and the person's

1 enrollment in an eligible institution, if the person is enrolled in
2 a degree program of more than two years.

3 SECTION 3. Sections 56.405(a), (d), and (f), Education
4 Code, are amended to read as follows:

5 (a) After initially qualifying for a grant under this
6 subchapter, a person may continue to receive a grant under this
7 subchapter during each semester or term in which the person is
8 enrolled at an eligible institution only if the person:

9 (1) meets financial need requirements as defined by
10 the coordinating board;

11 (2) is enrolled in an associate or baccalaureate
12 degree program or a certificate program at an eligible institution;

13 (3) is enrolled for at least one-half of a full course
14 load for a student in an associate or baccalaureate degree program
15 or a certificate program, as determined by the coordinating board;

16 (4) makes satisfactory academic progress toward an
17 associate or baccalaureate degree or a certificate; and

18 (5) complies with any additional nonacademic
19 requirement adopted by the coordinating board.

20 (d) For the purpose of this section, a person makes
21 satisfactory academic progress toward an associate or
22 baccalaureate degree or a certificate only if:

23 (1) in the person's first academic year the person
24 meets the satisfactory academic progress requirements of the
25 institution at which the person is enrolled; and

26 (2) in a subsequent academic year, the person:

27 (A) completes at least 75 percent of the semester

1 credit hours attempted in the student's most recent academic year;
2 and

3 (B) has earned an overall grade point average of
4 at least 2.5 on a four-point scale or the equivalent on course work
5 previously attempted at institutions of higher education.

6 (f) The coordinating board shall adopt rules to allow a
7 person who is otherwise eligible to receive a grant under this
8 subchapter, in the event of a hardship or for other good cause
9 shown, including a showing of a severe illness or other
10 debilitating condition that may affect the person's academic
11 performance or that the person is responsible for the care of a
12 sick, injured, or needy person and that the person's provision of
13 care may affect the person's academic performance, to receive a
14 grant under this subchapter:

15 (1) while enrolled in a number of semester credit
16 hours that is less than the number of semester credit hours required
17 under Subsection (a)(3); ~~or~~

18 (2) if the student's grade point average or completion
19 rate falls below the satisfactory academic progress requirements of
20 Subsection (d);

21 (3) for a number of semester credit hours that is
22 greater than the number of semester credit hours permitted under
23 Section 56.404(d); or

24 (4) for a number of years that is greater than the
25 number of years for which the person is eligible to receive a grant
26 under Section 56.404(f).

27 SECTION 4. Section 56.406, Education Code, is amended to

1 read as follows:

2 Sec. 56.406. GRANT USE. A person receiving a grant under
3 this subchapter may use the money only to pay the amount of tuition
4 and required fees and the cost of required textbooks [~~any usual and~~
5 ~~customary cost of attendance~~] at an eligible institution incurred
6 by the student. The institution may disburse all or part of the
7 proceeds of a grant under this subchapter to an eligible person only
8 if the tuition and required fees incurred by the person at the
9 institution have been paid.

10 SECTION 5. Sections 56.407(a), (c), and (g), Education
11 Code, are amended to read as follows:

12 (a) The amount of a grant awarded to a student under this
13 subchapter for a semester or other academic term [~~for a student~~
14 ~~enrolled full-time at an eligible institution~~] is an [~~the~~] amount
15 not to exceed the lesser of:

16 (1) the difference between:

17 (A) [determined by the coordinating board as] the
18 [average statewide] amount of tuition and required fees incurred by
19 the student at an eligible institution for that semester or term
20 plus a textbook stipend in an amount determined by the coordinating
21 board; and

22 (B) the amount of the Pell Grant for which the
23 student is eligible, if any; or

24 (2) the student's unmet financial need for that
25 semester or term [~~that a resident student enrolled full-time in an~~
26 ~~associate degree or certificate program would be charged for that~~
27 ~~semester or term at eligible institutions~~].

1 (c) Except as provided by Subsection (a)(1), the [~~The~~
2 amount of a grant under this subchapter may not be reduced by any
3 gift aid for which the person receiving the grant is eligible,
4 unless the total amount of a person's grant plus any gift aid
5 received exceeds the student's financial need [~~total cost of~~
6 ~~attendance at an eligible institution~~].

7 (g) An institution may use other available sources of
8 financial aid, other than a loan or work-study program [~~a Pell~~
9 ~~grant~~], to cover any difference in the amount of a grant under this
10 subchapter and the actual amount of tuition and required fees at the
11 institution.

12 SECTION 6. Sections 56.407(b) and (d), Education Code, are
13 repealed.

14 SECTION 7. The changes in law made by this Act apply to
15 participation in the Texas Educational Opportunity Grant program
16 beginning with the 2018-2019 academic year. Participation in the
17 Texas Educational Opportunity Grant program for an academic year
18 before the 2018-2019 academic year is governed by the applicable
19 law in effect immediately before the effective date of this Act, and
20 the former law is continued in effect for that purpose.

21 SECTION 8. This Act takes effect January 1, 2018.