

HB116 INTRODUCED



1 HB116

2 DGZ1SHT-1

3 By Representatives Oliver, Starnes, Stubbs, Smith, Fidler,
4 Paschal, Sells, Hammett, DuBose, Fincher, Wadsworth, Whorton,
5 Bolton, Mooney, Lamb, Brown, Bedsole, Shaver, Rehm, Underwood,
6 Givens, Harrison

7 RFD: Ways and Means Education

8 First Read: 13-Jan-26

9 PFD: 06-Jan-26



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4 SYNOPSIS:

5 The Volunteer Rescue Squad Tuition Reimbursement
6 Program pays tuition on behalf of students who are
7 studying to qualify for emergency medical services
8 personnel licensure from the Alabama Department of
9 Public Health. In exchange for tuition, the students
10 contract with the program to work for at least two
11 years for an ambulance service, a volunteer rescue
12 squad, or a volunteer fire department.

13 Current law authorizes the member schools of the
14 Alabama Community College System, the Alabama Fire
15 College, and the University of South Alabama to provide
16 the necessary educational program to students and
17 receive tuition reimbursement. This bill would add the
18 Alabama Department of Public Health through its
19 regional agencies of the Office of Emergency Medical
20 Services to the group of participating educational
21 institutions.

22 This bill would also make nonsubstantive,
23 technical revisions to update the existing code
24 language to current style.

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28 A BILL



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29 TO BE ENTITLED
30 AN ACT

42 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

43 Section 1. Sections 22-18-60, 22-18-61, 22-18-62, and
44 22-18-64, Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as
45 follows:

46 "§22-18-60

47 For the purposes of this article, the following terms
48 ~~shall~~ have the following meanings:

49 (1) ACCS. The Alabama Community College System.

(4) DESIGNATED EMS REGIONAL AGENCY. A regional agency



57 of the Office of Emergency Medical Services of the Alabama
58 Department of Public Health which is designated by the
59 department to offer educational courses to students.

60 (5) ELIGIBLE EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION. A member school
61 of the ACCS, the fire college, the University of South
62 Alabama, or a designated regional EMS agency.

63 (4)(6) EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICE PERSONNEL (EMSP). All
64 recognized levels of personnel licensed by the Alabama
65 Department of Public Health, who have met all primary or
66 renewal educational requirements, or both, set by the Alabama
67 Department of Public Health, and who are allowed to provide
68 medical care within the level of their scope of practice
69 granted by the Office of Emergency Medical Services within the
70 Alabama Department of Public Health.

71 (5)(7) FIRE COLLEGE. The Alabama Fire College.

72 (6)(8) STUDENT. A student enrolled in an emergency
73 medical services certification program at ~~a member institution~~
74 ~~of the ACCS, the fire college, or the University of South~~
75 ~~Alabama~~an eligible educational institution.

76 (7)(9) TUITION COSTS. Includes the actual cost of
77 tuition and fees required to complete an approved
78 ~~course~~program of instruction for EMSP certification, as
79 determined by each eligible educational institution.

80 (8)(11) VOLUNTEER RESCUE SQUAD. A volunteer rescue
81 squad located in this state ~~and that~~ is a member of the Alabama
82 Association of Rescue Squads.

83 (9)(10) VOLUNTEER FIRE DEPARTMENT. A volunteer fire
84 department located in this state."



85 "§22-18-61

86 (a) ~~The ACCS, the fire college, and the University of~~
87 ~~South Alabama~~Eligible educational institutions, in
88 consultation with the associations, shall jointly develop and
89 administer a student tuition reimbursement program for
90 students who contract to provide two years of emergency
91 medical services for volunteer rescue squads, volunteer fire
92 departments, or ambulance services after becoming a licensed
93 EMSP.

94 (b) (1) Tuition reimbursement under this article shall
95 cover tuition costs paid by the student or the volunteer
96 rescue squad, volunteer fire department, ambulance service, or
97 association on behalf of the student of which the student is a
98 member. Tuition paid by the volunteer rescue squad, volunteer
99 fire department, ambulance service, or association shall be
100 reimbursed directly to the volunteer rescue squad, volunteer
101 fire department, ambulance service, or association.

102 (2) Tuition reimbursement under this article shall not
103 include any tuition costs covered by grants or other monetary
104 awards provided to a student including, but not limited to,
105 federal education grants and scholarships, as determined by
106 the ACCS.

107 (3) Tuition costs shall not be reimbursed until the
108 student provides ACCS and the associations with documentation
109 that he or she has successfully completed the approved
110 ~~course~~program of instruction, proof of passing the
111 certification exam, production of a valid EMSP license from
112 the Alabama Department of Public Health, and a contractual



113 agreement to comply with the service requirements.

114 (c) In the event that a tuition reimbursement recipient
115 fails to meet the service requirements for any reason other
116 than extreme hardship as defined within the joint agreement
117 required in Section 22-18-64(b), the individual shall be
118 deemed to have breached the underlying contract and shall be
119 liable in the form of monetary damages to the state for the
120 immediate repayment of the total tuition costs reimbursed,
121 plus interest at the rate of eight percent. The associations
122 shall notify ACCS of recipients who fail to meet the service
123 requirements.

124 (d) Beginning with the 2023-2024 fiscal year, the
125 amount of tuition reimbursement available to students shall be
126 divided among volunteer fire departments, rescue squads, and
127 ambulance services based on available appropriations-in
128 compliance with the following standards:

129 (1) The ACCS shall create operational procedures to
130 ensure that funds and volunteer service commitments are split
131 equitably among volunteer fire departments, rescue squads, and
132 ambulance services. Notwithstanding the foregoing, priority
133 shall be given to volunteer fire departments, rescue squads,
134 and nonprofit ambulance services.

135 (2) The Alabama Department of Public Health shall adopt
136 a rule imposing a monetary cap on the amount of tuition costs
137 that may be reimbursed for students who complete the program
138 of instruction through a designated regional EMS agency, which
139 shall not exceed any cap in effect on the amount of reimbursed
140 tuition costs for the Alabama Fire College."



141 "§22-18-62

142 ~~Beginning October 1, 2018, the member~~ (a) Member
143 institutions of the ACCS, the ~~Fire College~~ fire college, ~~and~~
144 the University of South Alabama, and designated EMS regional
145 agencies may enter into contracts with new students seeking to
146 obtain certification as an EMSP.

147 (b) The Alabama Department of Public Health shall adopt
148 rules setting credentialing and accreditation standards for
149 private companies and instructors that teach courses on behalf
150 of the designated EMS regional agencies which are equal to the
151 standards of the other eligible education institutions."

152 "§22-18-64

153 (a) The ACCS shall annually report on the condition and
154 accomplishments of the tuition reimbursement program to the
155 Governor, Speaker of the House of Representatives, President
156 Pro Tempore of the Senate, the Chair of the House Ways and
157 Means Education Committee, the Chair of the Senate Finance and
158 Taxation Education Committee, and the Deputy Director of the
159 Legislative Services Agency, Fiscal Division. The report shall
160 include the number of students participating in the program
161 and the amount of tuition reimbursed for the reporting year.

162 ~~The member~~ Eligible educational institutions ~~of the ACCS, the~~
163 ~~fire college, and the University of South Alabama~~ shall
164 provide this information to ACCS for inclusion in the annual
165 report. The report shall be submitted by the fifth legislative
166 day of each regular session of the Legislature.

167 (b) The ACCS, ~~the fire college, and the University of~~
168 ~~South Alabama~~ shall enter into a joint agreement with the

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169 other eligible educational institutions to implement and
170 administer the tuition reimbursement program, which shall
171 include provisions for ensuring that operational expenses for
172 the program in a fiscal year do not exceed 10 percent of the
173 funding for the program in that fiscal year. The joint
174 agreement shall provide for limiting the acceptance of
175 applications for the program or limiting tuition
176 reimbursements when necessary, or both.

177 (c) Any monies received for the operations of the
178 tuition reimbursement program, including repayments, interest,
179 and penalties paid because of failure to honor service
180 requirements, shall be used to fund tuition reimbursements."

181 Section 2. This act shall become effective on October
182 1, 2026.