

1 HB496
2 183476-2
3 By Representatives Wingo, Ainsworth, Ford, Grimsley, Holmes
4 (M), Crawford, Fincher, Drake, Clouse, Sessions, Chesteen,
5 Gaston, Farley, Garrett, Rich, Ledbetter, Williams (JW),
6 Hanes, Patterson, Wood, Rowe, Faulkner, Shedd, Harper, South,
7 Mooney and Whorton (I)
8 RFD: Ways and Means Education
9 First Read: 11-APR-17

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8 SYNOPSIS: Under existing law, the Fostering Hope
9 Scholarship Act of 2015 provides for payment of
10 tuition for persons currently or formerly in the
11 foster care program, including children adopted at
12 the age of 14 or older, to attend public two-year
13 or four-year institutions of higher education in
14 the state.

15 This bill would make the scholarships
16 available for anyone adopted from the state foster
17 care program at the age of seven or more and
18 provide for limited retroactive effect.

19
20 A BILL
21 TO BE ENTITLED
22 AN ACT

23
24 Relating to the Fostering Hope Scholarship Act of
25 2015; to amend Sections 38-12B-2 and 38-12B-6, Code of Alabama
26 1975, to revise the age requirements for scholarships to any
27 person adopted from the state foster care program.

1 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF ALABAMA:

2 Section 1. Sections 38-12B-2 and 38-12B-6 of the
3 Code of Alabama 1975, are amended to read as follows:

4 "§38-12B-2.

5 "(a) The State Department of Human Resources shall
6 develop and administer Fostering Hope, a scholarship program
7 for designated persons currently or formerly in the state
8 foster care program, including children adopted from the
9 program at the age of ~~14~~ seven or older and children adopted
10 in the 12 months preceding the effective date of the act
11 adding this language who were at least seven years of age but
12 less than 14 years of age at the time of adoption. Commencing
13 with the 2016-2017 academic year, the program, on behalf of
14 participants, shall do either of the following:

15 "(1) Pay for tuition and required fees at any public
16 two-year or four-year institution of higher education in the
17 state.

18 "(2) Pay required fees for job training courses or
19 skill certifications that are offered by any public two-year
20 or four-year institution of higher education in the state or
21 other publicly funded training programs in the state, and not
22 considered an associate's degree, if the courses or
23 certifications are first approved by the department.

24 "(b) Payments of tuition and required fees are
25 considered program scholarships.

26 "§38-12B-6.

1 "(a) To be eligible to participate in the program, a
2 scholarship applicant shall satisfy all of the following:

3 "(1) Be in the legal custody of the foster care
4 program of the department at the time of graduation from high
5 school or earning a General Educational Development (GED) high
6 school equivalency certification; ~~or~~ in the permanent legal
7 custody of the foster care program of the department when his
8 or her adoption is finalized, at ~~14~~ seven years of age or
9 older, ~~and has graduated from high school or earned a GED~~
10 ~~certification;~~ or was in the permanent legal custody of the
11 foster care program when his or her adoption was finalized,
12 the adoption was finalized in the 12 months preceding the
13 effective date of the act adding this language, and he or she
14 was at least seven years of age but less than 14 years of age
15 at the time of the adoption.

16 "(2) Have net personal assets worth less than thirty
17 thousand dollars (\$30,000), subject to adjustment by the
18 Commissioner of the Department of Human Resources to account
19 for inflation.

20 "(3) Is younger than 26 years of age at the start of
21 the semester, training program, or certification program for
22 which tuition or fees are requested from the program.

23 "(4) Is accepted for enrollment in a
24 degree-granting, training, or certification program, or is
25 enrolled and working toward a degree, certificate, or
26 completion of a job training program, at a public two-year or

1 four-year institution of higher education or publicly funded
2 training program in the state.

3 "(5) Is making adequate progress toward the
4 completion of a degree, certification, or training program as
5 determined by rule promulgated by the department.

6 "(6) Has completed and submitted to the United
7 States Department of Education a Free Application for Federal
8 Student Aid (FAFSA), or the equivalent, before each year in
9 which he or she receives a Fostering Hope scholarship. He or
10 she shall have applied for all federal student financial aid
11 grants, including Pell grants, Supplemental Education
12 Opportunity Grants, and Education and Training Vouchers,
13 identified as being available for the student's application by
14 the department or by Federal Student Aid, an office of the
15 United States Department of Education, or its successor
16 agency.

17 "(b) To be eligible to participate in the program
18 after the first year of participation, an applicant shall also
19 satisfy all of the following:

20 "(1) Complete, after the first academic year in
21 which he or she receives a Fostering Hope scholarship, annual
22 volunteer service requirements or employment requirements
23 pursuant to rules promulgated by the department.

24 "(2) Remain in good standing with the policies
25 established by the college, university, or other training or
26 certification program in the state in which he or she is
27 enrolled.

1 "(c) Scholarship funds may be disbursed only if
2 sufficient funding for the Fostering Hope program is
3 available."

4 Section 2. This act shall become effective
5 immediately following its passage and approval by the
6 Governor, or its otherwise becoming law.