**A** **BILL**

TO AMEND SECTION 59‑104‑20, CODE OF LAWS OF SOUTH CAROLINA, 1976, RELATING TO ELIGIBILITY FOR PALMETTO FELLOWS SCHOLARSHIPS, SO AS TO INCLUDE TWO‑YEAR INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING AND TECHNICAL COLLEGES AMONG INSTITUTIONS OF HIGHER LEARNING WHOSE STUDENTS MAY BE ELIGIBLE FOR THE SCHOLARSHIPS.

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

SECTION 1. Section 59‑104‑20(E), (F), and (H) of the 1976 Code is amended to read:

“(E) A Palmetto Fellows Scholarship is available to an eligible resident student who attends or will attend an eligible ~~four‑year~~ public or independent institution.

(F) For purposes of subsection (E):

(1) ‘Public or independent Institution’ means a:

(a) South Carolina public institution defined in Section 59‑103‑5, ~~excluding a public two‑year or technical institution~~, and an independent institution as defined in Section 59‑113‑50, ~~excluding an eleemosynary junior or independent two‑year institution~~; or

(b) public or independent bachelor’s level institution chartered before 1962 whose major campus and headquarters are located within South Carolina.

(2) ‘Resident student’ means a:

(a) student who is either a member of a class graduating from a high school located in this State, a home school student who has successfully completed a high school home school program in this State in the manner required by law, or a student graduating from a preparatory high school outside this State, while a dependent of a parent or guardian who is a legal resident of this State and has custody of the dependent; and

(b) student classified as a resident of South Carolina for in‑state tuition purposes under Chapter 112 of this title at the time of enrollment at the institution.

(H) Notwithstanding another provision of law, a student who met the initial eligibility requirements to receive a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Award as a senior in high school and has met the continuing eligibility requirements shall receive the award. A student who received a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Award as a senior in high school but declined the award is eligible to reapply for the annual scholarship, providing he meets all of the initial and continuing academic eligibility requirements of the Palmetto Fellows program, if he transfers to a qualifying South Carolina institution of higher learning. The number of semesters or academic years a student attended an out‑of‑state institution are to be deducted from the number of semesters or academic years a student is eligible for the scholarship. All funding provided for Palmetto Fellows Scholarships regardless of its source or allocation must be used to implement the provisions of this subsection. A student who uses a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship to attend an eligible two‑year institution shall receive a maximum of four continuous semesters, and may continue to use the scholarship to attend an eligible four‑year institution, subject to maximum number of semesters for which the student may be eligible for scholarship.”

SECTION 2. This act takes effect upon approval by the Governor.

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