**South Carolina General Assembly**

125th Session, 2023-2024

**S. 125**

**STATUS INFORMATION**

General Bill

Sponsors: Senators Hembree, Turner, Young, Setzler, Fanning and Climer

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Introduced in the Senate on January 10, 2023

Introduced in the House on March 7, 2023

Last Amended on March 1, 2023

Currently residing in the House Committee on **Education and Public Works**

Summary: Scholarship Stipend

**HISTORY OF LEGISLATIVE ACTIONS**

Date Body Action Description with journal page number

11/30/2022 Senate Prefiled

11/30/2022 Senate Referred to Committee on **Education**

1/10/2023 Senate Introduced and read first time ([Senate Journal‑page 69](h:\sj\20230110.docx))

1/10/2023 Senate Referred to Committee on **Education** ([Senate Journal‑page 69](h:\sj\20230110.docx))

2/8/2023 Scrivener's error corrected

2/22/2023 Senate Committee report: Favorable with amendment **Education** ([Senate Journal‑page 8](h:\sj\20230222.docx))

2/27/2023 Scrivener's error corrected

2/28/2023 Senate Read second time ([Senate Journal‑page 19](h:\sj\20230228.docx))

3/1/2023 Senate Committee Amendment Adopted ([Senate Journal‑page 8](h:\sj\20230301.docx))

3/1/2023 Senate Read third time and sent to House ([Senate Journal‑page 8](h:\sj\20230301.docx))

3/1/2023 Senate Roll call Ayes-38 Nays-0 ([Senate Journal‑page 8](h:\sj\20230301.docx))

3/7/2023 House Introduced and read first time ([House Journal‑page 14](h:\hj\20230307.docx))

3/7/2023 House Referred to Committee on **Education and Public Works** ([House Journal‑page 14](h:\hj\20230307.docx))

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**VERSIONS OF THIS BILL**

[12/02/2022](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20221202.docx)

[02/08/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20230208.docx)

[02/22/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20230222.docx)

[02/27/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20230227.docx)

[02/27/2023-A](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20230227a.docx)

[03/01/2023](https://www.scstatehouse.gov/sess125_2023-2024/prever/125_20230301.docx)

Indicates Matter Stricken

Indicates New Matter

As Passed By The Senate

March 1, 2023

S. 125

Introduced by Senators Hembree, Turner, Young, Setzler, Fanning and Climer

S. Printed 03/01/23--S.

Read the first time January 10, 2023

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A bill

to amend the South Carolina Code of Laws by amending Section 59‑149‑15, relating to Additional LIFE Scholarship stipendS, so as to extend the stipend to education majors and to further provide the Commission on Higher Education promulgate regulations to define education major; by amending Section 59‑104‑25, relating to Additional Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipendS, so as to extend the stipend to education majors and to further provide for the promulgation of regulations; by amending Section 59‑149‑50, relating to a numerical ACT equivalent, so as to set the equivalent score of the ACT to 22; and by amending Section 59‑104‑20, relating to Palmetto Fellows Scholarship Program, so as to allow a student who uses a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship to attend a two-year institution shall receive a maximum of four continuous semesters.

Amend Title To Conform

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

SECTION 1. Section 59‑149‑15(A) and (B) of the S.C. Code are amended to read:

(A) A resident student who is at least a sophomore attending a four‑year public or private institution of higher learning in this State, who is majoring in education, science, or mathematics as defined below, and who is receiving a LIFE Scholarship for the current year, shall receive an additional LIFE Scholarship stipend equal to the cost of attendance after applying all other scholarships or grants, not to exceed two thousand five hundred dollars each year for no more than three additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a four‑year degree program, or for not more than four additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a five‑year degree program or a 3 plus 2 program. In addition, during his freshman year, the student majoring in science or mathematics must have successfully completed a total of at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics courses, or life and physical science courses, or a combination of both. A year is defined as thirty credit hours of instruction or its equivalent each year. To receive the additional LIFE Scholarship stipend each year, the student must receive the underlying LIFE Scholarship for that year and must be making acceptable progress each year toward receiving a degree in his education, science, or mathematics major. For purposes of meeting the required minimum level of instruction in mathematics and life and physical science courses during a student’s freshman year, advanced placement courses in mathematics and life and physical sciences taken in high school on which the student scored high enough on the advanced placement test to receive credit at his institution and for which he received credit, count toward the fulfillment of this minimum requirement.

(B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major but at a minimum shall include majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, science education, math education, and health care and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. The Commission on Higher Education shall by regulation define what constitutes an education major and shall set forth eligibility criteria that the student must meet to receive a LIFE Scholarship stipend but must include a contractual requirement, including a default provision, that the education student recipient must upon graduation work in a South Carolina public school for one year for every year the stipend is received. Additionally, the Commission on Higher Education annually shall communicate with high school guidance counselors regarding the list of qualifying majors.

SECTION 2. Section 59‑104‑25(A) and (B) of the S.C. Code are amended to read:

(A) A resident student who is at least a sophomore attending a four‑year public or private institution of higher learning in this State, who is majoring in education, science, or mathematics as defined below, and who is receiving a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship for the current year, shall receive an additional Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend equal to the cost of attendance after applying all other scholarships or grants, not to exceed three thousand three hundred dollars each year for no more than three additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if the student enrolled in a four‑year degree program, or for not more than four additional years of instruction, including his sophomore year, if enrolled in a five‑year degree program or a 3 plus 2 program. A year is defined as thirty credit hours of instruction or its equivalent each year. To receive the additional Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend each year, the student must receive the underlying Palmetto Fellows Scholarship for that year and must be making acceptable progress each year toward receiving a degree in his education, science, or mathematics major. In addition, during his freshman year, the student majoring in science or mathematics must have successfully completed a total of at least fourteen credit hours of instruction in mathematics courses, or life and physical science courses, or a combination of both. For purposes of meeting the required minimum level of instruction in mathematics and life and physical science courses during a student’s freshman year, advanced placement courses in mathematics and life and physical sciences taken in high school on which the student scored high enough on the advanced placement test to receive credit at his institution and for which he received credit, count toward the fulfillment of this minimum requirement.

(B) The Commission on Higher Education by regulation shall define what constitutes a science or mathematics major but at a minimum shall include majors in science or mathematics disciplines, computer science or informational technology, engineering, science education, math education, and health care and related disciplines including medicine and dentistry; provided, that nothing herein prevents a student from changing majors within acceptable science or mathematics disciplines. The Commission on Higher Education shall by regulation define what constitutes an education major and shall set forth eligibility criteria that the student must meet to receive a Palmetto Fellows Scholarship stipend but must include a contractual requirement, including a default provision, that the education student recipient must upon graduation work in a South Carolina public school for one year for every year the stipend is received. Additionally, the Commission on Higher Education annually shall communicate with high school guidance counselors regarding the list of qualifying majors.

SECTION 3. Section 59‑149‑50(A) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

(A) To be eligible for a LIFE Scholarship, a student must be either a student who has graduated from a high school located in this State, a student who has completed at least three of the final four years of high school within 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, a student who has graduated 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, or a student whose parent or guardian has served in or has retired from one of the United States Armed Forces within the last four years, paid income taxes in this State for a majority of the years of service, and is a resident of this State. These students also must meet the requirements of subsection (B) and be eligible for in‑state tuition and fees as determined pursuant to Chapter 112, Title 59 and applicable regulations. In addition, the student must have graduated from high school with a minimum of a 3.0 cumulative grade average on a 4.0 scale and have scored 1100 or better on the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) or have the equivalent ACT score 22 on the ACT; provided that, if the student is to attend such a public or independent two‑year college or university in this State, including a technical college, the SAT/ACT requirement does not apply. If a student chooses to attend such a public or independent institution of this State and does not make the required SAT/ACT score or the required high school grade point average, as applicable, the student may earn a LIFE Scholarship after his freshman year if he meets the grade point average and semester credit hour requirements of subsection (B). For the purpose of meeting the rank criteria pursuant to this section, the existing high school rank of a South Carolina resident attending an out‑of‑state high school may be used provided it is calculated pursuant to a state‑approved, standardized grading scale at the respective out‑of‑state high school. If the Commission on Higher Education determines that a state‑approved standardized grading scale substantially deviates from the South Carolina Uniform Grading Scale, the state‑approved standardized grading scale shall not be used to meet the eligibility requirements for the LIFE Scholarship.

SECTION 4. In the event that the SAT or ACT changes their respective scoring ranges, the Commission on Higher Education shall adjust the minimum scores required by this chapter in order to ensure equivalency.

SECTION 5. Section 59‑104‑20(H) of the S.C. Code is amended to read:

(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 the maximum number of semesters for which the student may be eligible for the scholarship.

SECTION 6. This act takes effect July 1, 2024.

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