

126th MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST REGULAR SESSION-2013

Legislative Document

No. 1261

H.P. 900

House of Representatives, March 28, 2013

An Act To Improve Access for Maine Students to Postsecondary Education

Reference to the Committee on Education and Cultural Affairs suggested and ordered printed.

Millicent M. Macfarland
MILLICENT M. MacFARLAND
Clerk

Presented by Representative LIBBY of Lewiston.
Cosponsored by Senator MILLETT of Cumberland and
Representatives: BEAULIEU of Auburn, CAREY of Lewiston, COTTA of China,
DAUGHTRY of Brunswick, KNIGHT of Livermore Falls, MALABY of Hancock, POULIOT
of Augusta, VOLK of Scarborough.

1	Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:
2	Sec. 1. 20-A MRSA c. 429-B is enacted to read:
3	CHAPTER 429-B
4 5	FULL TUITION WAIVER AT STATE POSTSECONDARY EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FOR TOP STUDENTS
6	§12581. Definitions
7 8	As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise indicates, the following terms have the following meanings.
9	1. Authority. "Authority" means the Finance Authority of Maine.
10 11	2. Eligible student. "Eligible student" means a high-achieving student who is eligible for a tuition waiver under this chapter.
12 13 14	3. High-achieving student. "High-achieving student" means a student who graduates from a secondary school in this State with an overall grade point average that ranks that student in the top 10% of the student's graduating class.
15 16 17	4. Maine resident. "Maine resident" means a person who meets residency requirements for in-state tuition at the postsecondary institution from which the individual is seeking a tuition waiver under this chapter.
18 19 20	5. Postsecondary educational institution. "Postsecondary educational institution" means any of the universities of the University of Maine System listed in section 10901-A and any community college established in section 12714.
21	§12582. Tuition waiver
22 23 24	A high-achieving student who demonstrates financial need and meets the requirements of this section may attend, in accordance with this section, any postsecondary educational institution free of tuition charges.
25 26	1. Eligibility. A high-achieving student is eligible for a tuition waiver under this chapter if the student:
27	A. Is a Maine resident;
28	B. Meets financial need qualifications established by the authority by rule;
29	C. Is accepted for admission to a postsecondary educational institution;
30 31	D. Is less than 21 years of age at the time of enrollment at the postsecondary educational institution; and
32	E. Remains in good academic standing at the postsecondary educational institution.

- 2. Limitation. The tuition waiver provided by this chapter is limited to undergraduate degree programs and is limited to not more than 5 years of full-time enrollment or its equivalent.
 - <u>3. Continuation.</u> A tuition waiver provided by this chapter is awarded to a student on a yearly basis and continues to be available each year as long as the student remains eligible under this section.

§12583. Administration

- 1. Application. A person desiring a tuition waiver under this chapter may apply to the authority for a determination of eligibility. Application must be on forms and in a manner prescribed by rules of the authority.
- 2. **Decision.** The authority shall determine whether an applicant is eligible for a tuition waiver under this chapter and notify the applicant. The authority shall also notify the postsecondary educational institution at which the person is accepted of the eligibility of that person for a tuition waiver. Unless notified by the authority of a change in the student's eligibility, the institution may not bill an eligible student for tuition.
- 3. Rules. The authority shall adopt rules to implement this chapter. The rules must establish a formula for determining the financial need under section 12582, subsection 1, paragraph B that takes into account the financial resources of the student, the total cost of attendance at the postsecondary educational institution and the total of all other grants, scholarships or other sources of financial assistance, other than loans, available to the student. Rules adopted under this section are routine technical rules under Title 5, chapter 375, subchapter 2-A.

23 SUMMARY

This bill provides a full tuition waiver at any campus of the Maine Community College System or the University of Maine System for Maine high school students who graduate in the top 10% of their graduating class and who meet financial need qualifications.