

9735

I N A S S E M B L Y

April 5, 2016

Introduced by M. of A. SOLAGES -- read once and referred to the Committee on Higher Education

AN ACT to amend the education law, in relation to providing free SUNY, CUNY and community college tuition to volunteer firefighters

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK, REPRESENTED IN SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

1 Section 1. Paragraph h of subdivision 2 of section 355 of the educa-
2 tion law is amended by adding a new subparagraph 1-a to read as follows:
3 (1-A) THE TRUSTEES SHALL IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO PERMIT ANY STUDENT WHO
4 HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO A STATE-OPERATED INSTITUTION OF THE STATE UNIVERSI-
5 TY TO ATTEND WITHOUT THE PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES IF SUCH STUDENT
6 SERVES AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER AS DEFINED IN SUBDIVISION ONE
7 OF SECTION TWO HUNDRED FIFTEEN OF THE GENERAL MUNICIPAL LAW. THE
8 PROVISIONS OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH SHALL ONLY APPLY TO COSTS OF ONE UNDER-
9 GRADUATE DEGREE AND ANY ADDITIONAL COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH MORE THAN ONE
10 SIMULTANEOUS UNDERGRADUATE DEGREE SHALL NOT BE COVERED BY THIS PROGRAM.
11 (I) THE TRUSTEES SHALL PROVIDE AN APPLICATION PROCESS AND ADMINISTER
12 THE PROGRAM ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:
13 (A) ANY STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR RESIDENT TUITION RATES IS ELIGIBLE FOR
14 THIS PROGRAM.
15 (B) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO SERVE AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER
16 FIREFIGHTER THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF HIS OR HER ACADEMIC PROGRAM.
17 (C) STUDENTS SHALL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THEIR DEGREE PROGRAM WITHIN
18 A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TIME TO BE SET BY THE TRUSTEES WHICH SHALL BE NO
19 LESS THAN THREE YEARS AND NO MORE THAN FIVE YEARS.
20 (D) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN A CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT
21 AVERAGE (G.P.A.) OF AT LEAST 2.5 IN ORDER TO REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR THE
22 PROGRAM.
23 (II) IF A STUDENT OR FORMER STUDENT FAILS TO FULFILL ANY OF THE
24 REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN CLAUSE (I) OF THIS SUBPARAGRAPH, THE TRUSTEES
25 SHALL CONVERT TO A STUDENT LOAN THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE TUITION WHICH
26 WOULD HAVE BEEN PAID BY SUCH STUDENT, AS DETERMINED BY THE NEW YORK
27 STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION, PLUS INTEREST, ACCORDING TO
28 A SCHEDULE TO BE DETERMINED BY SUCH CORPORATION. SUCH REPAYMENT MAY ALSO

EXPLANATION--Matter in *ITALICS* (underscored) is new; matter in brackets
[] is old law to be omitted.

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BE REQUIRED IF A RECIPIENT FAILS TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION NECESSARY TO DETERMINE CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY OR FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.

(III) ANY STUDENT WHO ELECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM UNDER THIS SUBPARAGRAPH SHALL BE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDING. FUNDS AWARDED ON THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHALL BE APPLIED TOWARDS THE COST OF TUITION PRIOR TO AN AWARD UNDER THIS SUBPARAGRAPH.

(IV) STUDENTS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OTHER COSTS INCLUDING HOUSING, FEES AND OTHER NON-TUITION RELATED CHARGES.

S 2. Subdivision 7 of section 6206 of the education law is amended by adding a new paragraph (d) to read as follows:

(D) THE TRUSTEES SHALL IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO PERMIT ANY STUDENT WHO HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO AN INSTITUTION OPERATED BY THE CITY UNIVERSITY TO ATTEND WITHOUT THE PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES IF SUCH STUDENT FULFILLS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

(I) THE TRUSTEES SHALL PROVIDE AN APPLICATION PROCESS AND ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

(A) ANY STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR RESIDENT TUITION RATES IS ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM.

(B) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO SERVE AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER FIREFIGHTER THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF HIS OR HER ACADEMIC PROGRAM.

(C) STUDENTS SHALL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THEIR DEGREE PROGRAM WITHIN A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TIME TO BE SET BY THE TRUSTEES WHICH SHALL BE NO LESS THAN THREE YEARS AND NO MORE THAN FIVE YEARS.

(D) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN A CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT AVERAGE (G.P.A.) OF AT LEAST 2.5 IN ORDER TO REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR THE PROGRAM.

(II) IF A STUDENT OR FORMER STUDENT FAILS TO FULFILL ANY OF THE REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE TRUSTEES SHALL CONVERT TO A STUDENT LOAN THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE TUITION WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN PAID BY SUCH STUDENT, AS DETERMINED BY THE NEW YORK STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION, PLUS INTEREST, ACCORDING TO A SCHEDULE TO BE DETERMINED BY SUCH CORPORATION. SUCH REPAYMENT MAY ALSO BE REQUIRED IF A RECIPIENT FAILS TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR INFORMATION NECESSARY TO DETERMINE CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY OR FOR ADMINISTRATION OF THE PROGRAM.

(III) ANY STUDENT WHO ELECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM UNDER THIS PARAGRAPH SHALL BE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM FUNDING. FUNDS AWARDED ON THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHALL BE APPLIED TOWARDS THE COST OF TUITION PRIOR TO AN AWARD UNDER THIS SUBPARAGRAPH.

(IV) STUDENTS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OTHER COSTS INCLUDING HOUSING, FEES AND OTHER NON-TUITION RELATED CHARGES.

S 3. Subdivision 1 of section 6304 of the education law is amended by adding a new paragraph e to read as follows:

E. THE TRUSTEES, SPONSORS OR OTHER GOVERNING BODY OF A COMMUNITY COLLEGE SHALL IMPLEMENT A PROGRAM TO PERMIT ANY STUDENT WHO HAS BEEN ADMITTED TO SUCH COMMUNITY COLLEGE TO ATTEND WITHOUT THE PAYMENT OF TUITION AND FEES IF SUCH STUDENT FULFILLS THE REQUIREMENTS OF SUCH PROGRAM PURSUANT TO THE PROVISIONS OF THIS PARAGRAPH.

(I) THE TRUSTEES SHALL PROVIDE AN APPLICATION PROCESS AND ADMINISTER THE PROGRAM ACCORDING TO THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

(A) ANY STUDENT ELIGIBLE FOR RESIDENT TUITION RATES IS ELIGIBLE FOR THIS PROGRAM.

1 (B) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO SERVE AS AN ACTIVE VOLUNTEER
2 FIREFIGHTER THROUGH THE COMPLETION OF HIS OR HER ACADEMIC PROGRAM.

3 (C) STUDENTS SHALL BE REQUIRED TO COMPLETE THEIR DEGREE PROGRAM WITHIN
4 A MINIMUM PERIOD OF TIME TO BE SET BY THE TRUSTEES WHICH SHALL BE NO
5 LESS THAN THREE YEARS AND NO MORE THAN FIVE YEARS.

6 (D) THE STUDENT SHALL BE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN A CUMULATIVE GRADE POINT
7 AVERAGE (G.P.A.) OF AT LEAST 2.5 IN ORDER TO REMAIN ELIGIBLE FOR THE
8 PROGRAM.

9 (II) IF A STUDENT OR FORMER STUDENT FAILS TO FULFILL ANY OF THE
10 REQUIREMENTS SET FORTH IN SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH, THE TRUS-
11 TEES SHALL CONVERT TO A STUDENT LOAN THE FULL AMOUNT OF THE TUITION
12 WHICH WOULD HAVE BEEN PAID BY SUCH STUDENT, AS DETERMINED BY THE NEW
13 YORK STATE HIGHER EDUCATION SERVICES CORPORATION, PLUS INTEREST, ACCORD-
14 ING TO A SCHEDULE TO BE DETERMINED BY SUCH CORPORATION. SUCH REPAYMENT
15 MAY ALSO BE REQUIRED IF A RECIPIENT FAILS TO RESPOND TO REQUESTS FOR
16 INFORMATION NECESSARY TO DETERMINE CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY OR FOR ADMINIS-
17 TRATION OF THE PROGRAM.

18 (III) ANY STUDENT WHO ELECTS TO PARTICIPATE IN THE PROGRAM UNDER THIS
19 PARAGRAPH SHALL BE REQUIRED TO APPLY FOR TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
20 FUNDING. FUNDS AWARDED ON THE TUITION ASSISTANCE PROGRAM SHALL BE
21 APPLIED TOWARDS THE COST OF TUITION PRIOR TO AN AWARD UNDER THIS SUBPAR-
22 AGRAPH.

23 (IV) STUDENTS SHALL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL OTHER COSTS INCLUDING HOUS-
24 ING, FEES AND OTHER NON-TUITION RELATED CHARGES.

25 S 4. This act shall take effect on the ninetieth day after it shall
26 have become a law.