

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2013 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 963

(Delegate Cullison, *et al.*)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Programs

This bill establishes the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program within the existing Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program for the child or surviving spouse of a public or nonpublic school employee who, as a result of an act of violence, died in the line of duty or is 100% disabled due to an injury sustained in the line of duty.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) can create new scholarship guidelines and a new application process using existing resources. To the extent that the appropriation for the existing Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship does not cover the demand for the new Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship, additional general funds of up to \$3,000 per eligible applicant will be needed for the duration of each scholarship. It is estimated that less than five applicants per year will qualify for this scholarship. It is assumed that postsecondary institutions can administer the scholarship with existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: It is assumed that community colleges can administer the scholarship with existing resources.

Small Business Effect: None. Given the small number of potential applicants, it is assumed that private postsecondary institutions can administer the scholarship with existing resources.

Analysis

Bill Summary: A “school employee” includes an employee of a public or nonpublic school in the State. A “surviving spouse” is a person who has not remarried.

The bill makes changes necessary to administer and fund the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship in conjunction with the existing Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship for military and public safety personnel and their eligible dependents.

Postsecondary institutions verify eligibility and award scholarships to eligible students. In October and February of each year, each postsecondary institution must report to MHEC the number of students eligible for a Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship in addition to the number of students eligible for the Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship. After verifying the number of eligible students for both programs, MHEC must allocate the funds for awards to the postsecondary institutions. If funds cannot be allocated in the fiscal year in which awards are made, priority must be given to allocating funds for those awards in the following fiscal year.

The bill establishes the Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Scholarship Fund as a special, nonlapsing fund not subject to the State Finance and Procurement Article. The State Treasurer must hold the fund and the Comptroller must account for the fund.

MHEC may accept any gift or grant from any person for the Edward T. Conroy or the Jean B. Cryor memorial scholarship programs. MHEC must use any such gift or grant for a scholarship from the programs. MHEC must also deposit any gift or grant that it receives for the programs with the State Treasurer.

Current Law: The Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship awards postsecondary education financial assistance to several categories of students – including a child or surviving spouse of members of the Armed Forces or State or local public safety employees who died in the line of duty or suffered a 100% permanent disability sustained in the line of duty. A scholarship of up to \$3,000 annually may be awarded to attend a postsecondary institution for five years of full-time study or eight years of part-time study.

An applicant must be a resident of Maryland or have been a resident of the State at the time of the event that made the applicant primarily eligible for the scholarship. Likewise, an applicant must be accepted for admission or enrolled in the regular undergraduate, graduate, or professional program at an eligible institution or be enrolled in a two-year terminal certificate program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate program.

Awards may not exceed tuition and mandatory fees of a full-time undergraduate Maryland resident at a four-year institution within the University System of Maryland, other than the University of Maryland University College and the University of Maryland, Baltimore, with the highest annual expenses for a full-time resident undergraduate. Awards also may not be less than \$3,000 or the equivalent annual tuition and mandatory fees of the institution attended by the recipient of the scholarship,

whichever is the least. Scholarships may be used at private or public four-year institutions or community colleges, and they may be used for undergraduate or graduate study.

Background: On December 14, 2012, a 20-year-old gunman fatally shot 20 children and 6 adult staff members at Sandy Hook Elementary School in Newtown, Connecticut. The incident was the second-deadliest school shooting in U.S. history, after the 2007 Virginia Tech massacre. The gunman reportedly had a mental disability or disorder, although the exact nature of the illness is under dispute.

Jean B. Cryor

Jean B. Cryor was a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from District 15 for 12 years (1995-2007) and later sat on the Montgomery County Planning Board, by appointment, from June 2007 until the time of her death in 2009. Delegate Cryor was also a writer, editor, and publisher of the *Gazette Newspapers* and a reporter with the *Philadelphia Bulletin*. Among other accolades, Delegate Cryor received an award in 2002 from the State Board of Education for building the Bridge to Educational Excellence in Maryland Public Schools in recognition of her service on the Commission on Education Finance, Equity, and Excellence (known as the Thornton Commission), which led to enactment of the Bridge to Excellence in Public Schools Act of 2002 (Chapter 288, SB 856).

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Baltimore City Community College, Morgan State University, University System of Maryland, Department of Legislative Services

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - March 11, 2013
mc/rhh Revised - House Third Reader - April 2, 2013
Revised - Enrolled Bill - May 8, 2013

Analysis by: Caroline L. Boice

Direct Inquiries to:
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510