

Department of Legislative Services

Maryland General Assembly

2001 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Senate Bill 12 (Senator Pinsky)

Economic and Environmental Affairs

Senatorial Scholarships - Use at Out-of-State Institutions - Disabled Applicants

This bill adds disabled applicants to the higher education students who may receive senatorial scholarship funds to attend colleges and universities outside Maryland. The institution of higher education at which the disabled student will be studying must make special provisions for disabled students that are not available at an institution in the State. Senators may not reward more than 10% of their allotted scholarship funds to students attending institutions outside the State.

This bill is effective June 1, 2001.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: None. The bill codifies current practice.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

Current Law: Each Maryland Senator may award \$34,500 in senatorial scholarships per year, no more than \$2,000 of which may go to any one student. Senators may distribute up to 10% of their senatorial scholarship funds to applicants attending accredited higher education institutions outside the State if the applicants: (1) will be studying in an academic area that is not available in the State; or (2) are hearing impaired and will be studying at an institution that makes special provisions for hearing impaired students that

are not available in the State. The Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) has interpreted the provision for hearing impaired students to include any students with a disability for which special provisions are not available in Maryland.

Background: In the recent past, the State Scholarship Administration has extended the senatorial scholarship eligibility to students with disabilities who attend out-of-state institutions, if special services they need are not available at Maryland colleges and universities. Enacted in the 1950s, the senatorial scholarship program has always included a provision to allow hearing impaired students to receive funds for out-of-state colleges. In its interpretation of the statute, MHEC has concluded that the legislative intent was to provide an option for students who have any disability that cannot be served in a Maryland institution. The Scholarship Administration decides if a disabled student qualifies for an out-of-state school by reviewing disability services at colleges as well as documentation from physicians or disability counselors.

In fiscal 2001, Maryland Senators awarded just over \$6.1 million to 6,020 senatorial scholarship recipients. Four percent of the scholarship funds were awarded to students attending institutions of higher education outside of Maryland.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

Information Source(s): Maryland Higher Education Commission, Department of Legislative Services

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Analysis by: Mark W. Collins

Direct Inquiries to:
John Rixey, Coordinating Analyst
(410) 946-5510
(301) 970-5510