

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2002 Session

FISCAL NOTE

Revised

House Bill 827

(Chairman, Appropriations Committee)
(Departmental – Human Resources)

Appropriations

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

Higher Education - Waiver of Tuition and Fees - Clarifying Foster Care Recipients

This departmental bill alters foster care recipients' eligibility for tuition waivers at public institutions of higher education. Instead of residing in foster care homes at the time of their eighteenth birthdays, foster care recipients must reside in foster care homes at the time of their high school graduations or upon completion of their general equivalency development (GED) examinations. The bill also clarifies that only foster care recipients who were placed in foster care by the Department of Human Resources are eligible for the tuition waivers.

The bill is effective July 1, 2002.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Tuition and fees revenues at public institutions of higher education could decline minimally due to the expansion of eligibility for tuition waivers. No effect on expenditures.

Local Effect: Tuition and fees revenues at community colleges could decline minimally due to the expansion of eligibility for tuition waivers. Local appropriations to community colleges would not be affected.

Small Business Effect: The Department of Human Resources (DHR) has determined that this bill has minimal or no impact on small business (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment. (The attached assessment does not reflect amendments to the bill.)

Analysis

Current Law: Foster care recipients are eligible for tuition waivers at public institutions of higher education in Maryland if: (1) they resided in foster care homes on their eighteenth birthdays; or (2) they resided in foster care homes on their fourteenth birthdays and then were adopted out of the foster care homes. Foster care recipients must also: (1) be enrolled at public institutions of higher education by the time they turn 21; (2) be enrolled as candidates for associate's or bachelor's degrees; and (3) file annually for federal and State financial aid. If a qualifying foster care recipient receives State or federal assistance to attend a public institution of higher education, the foster care recipient is not required to pay tuition above the amount of the assistance. Qualifying foster care recipients are eligible for tuition waivers until five years after enrolling as a candidate for a degree or until earning a bachelor's degree, whichever comes first.

Background: Chapter 506 of 2000 established tuition waivers for foster care recipients. According to DHR, the purpose of this bill is to allow adolescents living in foster care homes who have graduated from high school or completed GEDs at the age of 16 or 17 to receive the tuition waivers that, under current law, are only available to foster care recipients who are at least 18.

State and Local Revenues: DHR reports that there are approximately 4,700 children living in foster care homes in Maryland. The University System of Maryland (USM) advises that only a minimal number of foster care recipients have received tuition waivers during the first two years of the program. This bill could result in a small increase to the number of tuition waivers. Any impact on tuition and fees revenues would be minimal.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History: First Reader - February 26, 2002
mld/cer Revised - House Third Reader - April 4, 2002

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