

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2008 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

Senate Bill 141 (Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee)
(By Request – Departmental – Higher Education Commission)
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Ways and Means

Maryland Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program - Qualifications

This departmental bill expands eligibility for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program to eligible students attending institutions of higher education in Maryland that offer first professional degrees in pharmacy.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: Funding for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program is as provided in the State budget; therefore, expanding the program would not require additional expenditures. Because funding for the program is distributed to institutions of higher education to disburse to qualifying students at the schools, expanding eligibility for the scholarships without additional funds would result in a slight reallocation of existing funds among the eligible institutions. Revenues would not be affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: The Maryland Higher Education Commission has determined that the bill has minimal or no impact on small businesses (attached). Legislative Services concurs with this assessment.

Analysis

Current Law: A recipient of a graduate and professional scholarship must be a Maryland resident, demonstrate a financial need, and attend one of several specified graduate and professional schools. Scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$5,000 per school year and may not be received for more than eight semesters.

MHEC must allocate funds from the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program to institutions of higher education based on the proportion of State residents enrolled in eligible programs at each institution. Institutions then distribute the scholarship funds to eligible students.

Background: MHEC advises that only the University of Maryland, Baltimore currently receives funds to provide scholarships to pharmacy students. With the recent addition of a first professional degree in pharmacy at the College of Notre Dame, and with other schools looking to add similar programs, MHEC would like the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program to be expanded to accommodate new post-graduate pharmacy schools.

The adopted fiscal 2009 State budget includes \$1.5 million in general funds for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program, the same amount of funding appropriated in fiscal 2007 and 2008.

State Expenditures: Funding for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program is as provided in the annual State budget, so the bill would not necessitate additional spending. MHEC advises that if the bill is enacted without additional funding, the College of Notre Dame, based on its enrollment of pharmacy students, would receive approximately \$9,000 of the \$1.5 million fiscal 2009 funding for the Graduate and Professional Scholarship Program. Allocations for all other participating institutions would decrease slightly.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: None.

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

Fiscal Note History:
ncs/rhh

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