

Department of Legislative Services
Maryland General Assembly
2015 Session

FISCAL AND POLICY NOTE
Revised

House Bill 11

(Delegate O'Donnell)

Ways and Means

Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs

**Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship
Programs - Eligibility**

This bill expands the eligibility requirements for the Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship programs to include the *stepchildren* of specified U.S. Armed Forces members, State or local public safety employees, or school employees who died in the line of duty or are 100% disabled due to an injury sustained in the line of duty. The expansion also includes the stepchildren of victims of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. The bill also renames the Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship to be the Edward T. and *Mary A.* Conroy Memorial Scholarship.

The bill takes effect June 1, 2015.

Fiscal Summary

State Effect: To the extent that the appropriation for the existing Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship and Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship does not cover the demand for the expanded scholarships, general fund expenditures increase by up to \$3,000 per eligible applicant for the duration of each scholarship. It is estimated that fewer than five additional applicants per year will qualify for the scholarships. Postsecondary institutions in the State must grant the scholarships to all eligible individuals and bear the cost of the scholarship until they are reimbursed by the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC). It is assumed that postsecondary institutions can administer the scholarship with existing resources. MHEC can update scholarship guidelines and a new application process including renaming the scholarship using existing resources. Revenues are not affected.

Local Effect: None.

Small Business Effect: None.

Analysis

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 U.S. 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. The child or surviving spouse of a victim of the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks is also eligible for an Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship. The Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program makes the same type of financial assistance available to 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. Individuals eligible for either scholarship may be awarded up to \$3,000 annually to attend a postsecondary institution in the State for five years of full-time study or eight years of part-time study.

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 an Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship or a Jean B. Cryor 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.

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: From 1973 through 1990, a previous iteration of a scholarship for dependents of members of the U.S. 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 specifically allowed a stepchild to receive the scholarship.

The fiscal 2016 State budget includes \$570,474 in general funds for the Edward T. Conroy Memorial Scholarship programs. MHEC has supplemented the general fund appropriation for the program with special funds from the Need-Based Student Financial Assistance Fund in fiscal 2012 through 2015 in order to reimburse institutions for all qualified recipients, but no special funds are budgeted in fiscal 2016. Since its inception in 2013, there have not been any recipients eligible for the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship.

Mary A. Conroy

Mary A. Conroy was a Maryland State senator representing District 23A in Prince George's County for several months following the death of her husband Edward T. Conroy in 1982. She later served as a member of the Maryland House of Delegates from 1986 until 2007. In the House of Delegates, she served on a number of committees including the House Ways and Means Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee and served as the Deputy Majority Leader from 2003 until 2007. She was born in New York on December 25, 1931, and died in Annapolis, Maryland on August 9, 2014.

Additional Information

Prior Introductions: None.

Cross File: SB 865 (Senators Peters and Waugh) – Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs.

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

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