

## Chapter 798

## (House Bill 3)

AN ACT concerning

**Higher Education – ~~Nonresident Tuition~~ *Student Financial Assistance* –  
~~Exemption for Dependents of State or Local Public Safety Employees~~  
(Maryland Fallen Heroes Tuition Benefits Act)**

FOR the purpose of exempting *spouses and* financially dependent children of certain State or local public safety employees from paying out-of-state or out-of-county tuition at a public institution of higher education in the State; *altering the method for allocating funds for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program*; and generally relating to ~~nonresident tuition exemptions for~~ *student financial assistance for spouses and* financially dependent children of State or local public safety employees.

BY adding to

Article – Education

Section 15–106.12

Annotated Code of Maryland

(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

~~BY repealing and reenacting, without amendments,~~~~Article – Education~~~~Section 18–601(a)(1) and (5)~~~~Annotated Code of Maryland~~~~(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)~~BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,Article – EducationSection 18–601Annotated Code of Maryland(2022 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

**Article – Education**

**15–106.12.**

(A) IN THIS SECTION, “STATE OR LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE” HAS THE MEANING STATED IN § 18–601 OF THIS ARTICLE.

(B) NOTWITHSTANDING THE STATE OR COUNTY IN WHICH THE SPOUSE OR THE CHILD RESIDES, A SPOUSE OR A FINANCIALLY DEPENDENT CHILD OF A STATE OR LOCAL PUBLIC SAFETY EMPLOYEE WHO DIES AS A RESULT OF OR IN THE COURSE OF PERFORMANCE OF DUTIES IS EXEMPT FROM PAYING OUT-OF-STATE OR OUT-OF-COUNTY TUITION AT A PUBLIC INSTITUTION OF HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE.

(C) THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT REGULATIONS TO IMPLEMENT THIS SECTION.

18-601.

~~(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.~~

~~(5) "State or local public safety employee" means a person who is employed in the State as:~~

~~(i) A career or volunteer member of a:~~

~~1. Fire department;~~

~~2. Ambulance company or squad; or~~

~~3. Rescue company or squad;~~

~~(ii) A law enforcement officer;~~

~~(iii) A correctional officer; or~~

~~(iv) A member of the Maryland National Guard who was a resident of this State at the time of death.~~

*(a) (1) In this section the following words have the meanings indicated.*

*(2) "Disabled public safety employee" means a State or local public safety employee who sustains an injury in the line of duty that:*

*(i) Precludes the individual from continuing to serve or be employed as a State or local public safety employee; and*

*(ii) In the case of a volunteer member of a fire department or ambulance or rescue company or squad, precludes the member from continuing to be employed in the nonpublic safety occupation in which the member is engaged at the time of the injury.*

(3) “Fund” means the Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Scholarship Fund.

(4) “School employee” includes an employee of a public or nonpublic school in the State.

(5) “State or local public safety employee” means a person who is employed in the State as:

(i) A career or volunteer member of a:

1. Fire department;

2. Ambulance company or squad; or

3. Rescue company or squad;

(ii) A law enforcement officer;

(iii) A correctional officer; or

(iv) A member of the Maryland National Guard who was a resident of this State at the time of death.

(6) “Surviving spouse” means a person who has not remarried.

(7) “Victim of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks” means a Maryland resident who was killed as a result of the attacks on the World Trade Center in New York City, the attack on the Pentagon in Virginia, or the crash of United Airlines Flight 93 in Pennsylvania.

(b) There is a program of scholarships that are awarded by eligible postsecondary institutions under this section.

(c) (1) The program for uniformed services and public safety personnel and their eligible dependents is the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program.

(2) The program for eligible dependents of public and nonpublic school employees is the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program.

(d) (1) A person may apply to an eligible postsecondary institution for a scholarship under this section if the person:

(i) 1. Is accepted for admission or enrolled in the regular undergraduate, graduate or professional program at an eligible institution;

2. Is enrolled in a 2-year terminal certificate program in which the course work is acceptable for transfer credit for an accredited baccalaureate program in an eligible institution; or

3. Is enrolled in a private career school;

(ii) Is at least 16 years old; and

(iii) Meets the other eligibility criteria specified in this section.

(2) To apply for a scholarship under this section, the following persons are required to be a resident of Maryland at the time of application or at the time of the disabling or fatal event:

(i) A son, daughter, stepson, stepdaughter, or the surviving spouse of a member of the uniformed services who:

1. Died as a result of service after December 7, 1941;

2. Suffered a service connected 100% permanent disability after December 7, 1941; or

3. Was declared to be a prisoner of war or missing in action, if that occurred on or after January 1, 1960, as a result of the Vietnam conflict, and if the child was born prior to or while the parent was a prisoner of war or missing in action;

(ii) A prisoner of war or missing in action, if that occurred on or after January 1, 1960, as a result of the Vietnam conflict and was a resident of this State at the time the person was declared to be a prisoner of war or missing in action;

(iii) A veteran who:

1. Suffers a service connected disability of 25% or greater; and

2. Has exhausted or is no longer eligible for federal veterans' educational benefits;

(iv) A son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter of or the surviving spouse of a victim of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks;

(v) A son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter of a school employee who, as a result of an act of violence:

1. Died in the line of duty; or

2. Sustained an injury in the line of duty that rendered the school employee 100% disabled; or

(vi) The surviving spouse of a school employee who, as a result of an act of violence:

1. Died in the line of duty; or

2. Sustained an injury in the line of duty that rendered the school employee 100% disabled.

(3) To apply for a scholarship under this section, the following persons are not required to be a resident of Maryland at the time of application or at the time of the disabling or fatal event:

(i) 1. A son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter of any State or local public safety employee killed in the line of duty; or

2. The surviving spouse of any State or local public safety employee killed in the line of duty; or

(ii) 1. A disabled public safety employee;

2. A son, daughter, stepson, or stepdaughter of a disabled public safety employee who sustains an injury in the line of duty that renders the public safety employee 100% disabled; or

3. The surviving spouse of a disabled public safety employee who sustains an injury in the line of duty that renders the public safety employee 100% disabled.

(e) A scholarship awarded under this section:

(1) May be used for the tuition and mandatory fees at any eligible institution; and

(2) May not:

(i) Exceed the equivalent annual tuition and mandatory fees of a resident undergraduate student at the 4-year public institution of higher education within the University System of Maryland, other than the University of Maryland Global Campus and University of Maryland, Baltimore Campus, with the highest annual expenses for a full-time resident undergraduate; and

(ii) Be less than the lesser of:

1. \$3,000; or

2. The equivalent annual tuition and mandatory fees of a resident of the institution attended by the recipient of the scholarship.

(f) (1) Each postsecondary institution shall determine the eligibility of persons who apply to the institution for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program.

(2) Funds for the Edward T. and Mary A. Conroy Memorial Scholarship Program and the Jean B. Cryor Memorial Scholarship Program shall be allocated by the Commission to each postsecondary institution based on [the number of eligible recipients attending each institution] **A FORMULA DETERMINED BY THE COMMISSION, WHICH MAY INCLUDE PRIOR YEAR ENROLLMENT, ELIGIBLE RECIPIENTS, AND INSTITUTIONAL TUITION AND FEES.**

(3) In October and February of each year, each postsecondary institution shall report to the Commission the number of eligible recipients attending the institution.

(4) (I) The Commission shall allocate funds for awards to postsecondary institutions [upon verification of eligible recipients attending the institutions] **SUBJECT TO THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS AS PROVIDED IN THE STATE BUDGET.**

(II) **EACH POSTSECONDARY INSTITUTION MAY MAKE AWARDS TO ELIGIBLE STUDENTS SUBJECT TO THE ALLOCATION OF FUNDS FROM THE COMMISSION UNDER SUBPARAGRAPH (I) OF THIS PARAGRAPH.**

(5) [If funds cannot be allocated in the fiscal year in which awards are made, priority shall be given to allocating funds for those awards in the following fiscal year] **THE COMMISSION SHALL ADOPT GUIDELINES TO IMPLEMENT THIS SUBSECTION.**

(g) (1) Each recipient of a scholarship under this section may hold the award for 5 years of full-time study or 8 years of part-time study.

(2) The number of eligible recipients under subsection (d)(2)(iii) of this section shall be limited to 15 each year.

(3) An award provided under subsection (d)(2)(iv) of this section may not exceed the amount specified in subsection (e)(2) of this section when combined with any other scholarship received by a student based on the student's status as a child or spouse of a victim of the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks.

(4) **SUBJECT TO A RECIPIENT'S CONTINUED ELIGIBILITY UNDER SUBSECTION (D) OF THIS SECTION AND THE AVAILABILITY OF FUNDS UNDER**

**SUBSECTION (F) OF THIS SECTION, AN AWARDING AUTHORITY SHALL GIVE PRIORITY TO A RECIPIENT OF A SCHOLARSHIP BEFORE AWARDING FUNDS TO NEW APPLICANTS.**

(h) (1) There is an Edward T. Conroy and Jean B. Cryor Scholarship Fund.

(2) The Commission shall administer the Fund.

(3) The Fund is a special, nonlapsing fund that is not subject to § 7-302 of the State Finance and Procurement Article.

(4) The State Treasurer shall hold the Fund and the Comptroller shall account for the Fund.

(5) The Commission:

(i) May accept any gift or grant from any person for the Fund;

(ii) Shall use any gift or grant that it receives for a scholarship from the programs; and

(iii) Shall deposit any gift or grant that it receives for the programs with the State Treasurer.

(i) For fiscal year 2024 and each fiscal year thereafter, the Governor shall include in the annual budget bill an appropriation of at least \$4,000,000 to the Fund.

SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July 1, 2026.

**Approved by the Governor, May 26, 2026.**