

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 777

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish a 21st Century
Scholars Program.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 13, 1997

Mr. FATTAH (for himself, Mr. CLAY, and Mr. KILDEE) introduced the follow-
ing bill; which was referred to the Committee on Education and the
Workforce

A BILL

To amend the Higher Education Act of 1965 to establish
a 21st Century Scholars Program.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “21st Century Scholars
5 Act of 1997”.

6 **SEC. 2. PELL GRANT GUARANTEES.**

7 (a) AMENDMENT.—Subpart 1 of part A of title IV
8 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 is amended by in-
9 serting after section 401 (20 U.S.C. 1070a) the following
10 new section:

1 **“SEC. 401A. PELL GRANT GUARANTEES.**

2 “(a) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this section to
3 require the Secretary to establish a program to provide
4 to eligible 21st Century Scholars (in this section referred
5 to as ‘eligible Scholars’) a legally binding promise, secured
6 by the full faith and credit of the United States, to pro-
7 vide, for each of up to 4 years of attendance at an eligible
8 institution, the maximum authorized Pell Grant to cover
9 the costs of attendance at such institution.

10 “(b) ELIGIBLE SCHOLARS.—

11 “(1) ELIGIBLE SCHOLARS.—For purposes of
12 this section, a student is an eligible Scholar if the
13 student successfully completed the uppermost grade
14 at a qualifying elementary school and was a resident
15 of the school attendance area of such school during
16 the school year in which such grade was completed.

17 “(2) QUALIFYING ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS.—For
18 purposes of paragraph (1), an elementary school is
19 a qualifying elementary school if such school serves
20 a school attendance area in which the concentration
21 of children from low-income families exceeds 75 per-
22 cent, as determined under section 1113(a)(3)(A) of
23 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
24 1965 (20 U.S.C. 6313(a)(3)(A)).

25 “(c) NOTIFICATION TO ELIGIBLE SCHOLARS.—

1 “(1) INITIAL NOTIFICATION.—Upon receipt of
2 notification from a qualifying elementary school of
3 the identities and addresses of each student meeting
4 the requirements of subsection (b), the Secretary
5 shall send to each such student at their school, and
6 to the parents or guardians of such student, a writ-
7 ten commitment to provide, for each of up to 4 years
8 of attendance at an eligible institution, the maxi-
9 mum authorized Pell Grant to cover the costs of at-
10 tendance at an eligible institution. A copy of the no-
11 tice shall be maintained in the student’s official
12 record. Such notice shall contain—

13 “(A) a statement of the value of the award
14 and its character as a legal obligation of the
15 United States; and

16 “(B) the obligations of students and par-
17 ents or guardians, including the obligation to
18 meet current Pell requirements at the time of
19 admission to postsecondary education, except as
20 otherwise provided in this section.

21 “(2) ANNUAL NOTICES.—The Secretary shall
22 annually provide to each school, for each student no-
23 tified under paragraph (1), and to the parents or
24 guardians of such student, a notice restating the

1 written commitment provided under paragraph (1)
2 and containing—

3 “(A) a statement of the maximum Pell
4 Grant then currently authorized;

5 “(B) a notification to the parents or
6 guardians of the status of the Secretary’s
7 records of the Scholar’s current address, grade,
8 and school where currently enrolled; and

9 “(C) instructions to the parents or guard-
10 ians of how to inform the Secretary of any
11 changes of the Scholar’s address, grade, or
12 school where currently enrolled.

13 “(3) PLEDGE OF FULL FAITH AND CREDIT.—
14 The full faith and credit of the United States is
15 pledged to the payment of the written commitments
16 provided under this subsection.

17 “(d) MAXIMUM AUTHORIZED PELL GRANT.—

18 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The commitments provided
19 under subsection (c) shall guarantee to each eligible
20 Scholar an amount that, subject to paragraph (2),
21 is equal to the greater of—

22 “(A) the maximum Pell Grant available,
23 pursuant to an appropriations Act, for the aca-
24 demic year for which the Scholar is seeking
25 payment of the commitment; or

1 “(B) the maximum Pell Grant available,
2 pursuant to an appropriations Act, for the aca-
3 demic year during which the Scholar is first no-
4 tified under subsection (c)(2) of such commit-
5 ment.

6 “(2) COST OF ATTENDANCE.—Notwithstanding
7 paragraph (1), the amount guaranteed to an eligible
8 Scholar for any academic year shall not exceed such
9 Scholar’s cost of attendance at the eligible institu-
10 tion at which such Scholar is enrolled or accepted
11 for enrollment.

12 “(3) OTHER LIMITATIONS NOT APPLICABLE.—
13 Except as provided in paragraphs (1) and (2), the
14 Pell Grant awarded under this section shall not be
15 subject to any reduction based on expected family
16 contribution, or to any other limitation or reduction
17 pursuant to section 401 or any other law.

18 “(e) APPLICATIONS FOR GRANTS.—The Secretary
19 shall from time to time set dates by which eligible Scholars
20 shall file applications for payments of the commitments
21 provided under this section. Each such Scholar shall file
22 an application therefor containing such information and
23 assurances as the Secretary may deem necessary to enable
24 the Secretary to carry out the functions and responsibil-
25 ities of this section.

1 “(f) DISTRIBUTION OF GRANTS TO STUDENTS.—
 2 Payments under this section shall be made in accordance
 3 with regulations promulgated by the Secretary for such
 4 purpose, in such manner as will best accomplish the pur-
 5 pose of this section. Any disbursement allowed to be made
 6 by crediting the student’s account shall be limited to tui-
 7 tion and fees and, in the case of institutionally owned
 8 housing, room and board. The student may elect to have
 9 the institution provide other such goods and services by
 10 crediting the student’s account.”.

11 (b) TRIO PARTICIPATION AND MENTORING.—

12 (1) TRIO ELIGIBILITY.—Section 402A(g) of
 13 Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1070a-
 14 11(g)) is amended by adding at the end the follow-
 15 ing new sentence: “Any individual who has been
 16 identified as an eligible 21st Century Scholar under
 17 section 401A shall be treated as a low-income indi-
 18 vidual for purposes of this section.”.

19 (2) TALENT SEARCH MENTORING.—Section
 20 402B(b) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1070a-12(b)) is
 21 amended—

22 (A) by striking “and” at the end of para-
 23 graph (9);

24 (B) by striking the period at the end of
 25 paragraph (10) and inserting “; and”; and

1 (C) by adding at the end the following new
2 paragraph:

3 “(11) special mentoring programs and activities
4 for eligible 21st Century Scholars identified under
5 section 401A.”.

6 (3) EARLY INTERVENTION MENTORING, COUN-
7 SELING, OUTREACH, AND SUPPORTIVE SERVICES.—
8 Section 404C(c) of such Act (20 U.S.C. 1070a-
9 23(c)) is amended by striking “who is eligible” and
10 inserting “who is an eligible 21st Century Scholars
11 identified under section 401A or who is eligible”.

12 (c) CONFORMING AMENDMENTS TO THE ELEMEN-
13 TARY AND SECONDARY EDUCATION ACT OF 1965.—

14 (1) STATE ASSURANCES.—Section 1111(c) of
15 the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
16 1965 is amended—

17 (A) in paragraph (5), by striking “and”
18 after the semicolon;

19 (B) in paragraph (6), by striking the pe-
20 riod and adding “; and”; and

21 (C) by adding at the end the following:

22 “(7) the State educational agency annually will
23 notify the recipients of awards under subpart 2 of
24 part A of title IV of the Higher Education Act of

1 1965 and the Secretary of the identities and ad-
2 dresses of all students who meet the requirements of
3 section 401A(b) of the Higher Education Act of
4 1965.”.

5 (2) LOCAL ASSURANCES.—Section 1112(c)(1)
6 of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of
7 1965 is amended—

8 (A) in subparagraph (G), by striking
9 “and” after the semicolon;

10 (B) in subparagraph (H), by striking the
11 period and adding “; and”; and

12 (C) by adding at the end the following:

13 “(I) notify the State educational agency
14 annually of the identities and addresses of all
15 students who meet the requirements of section
16 401A(b) of the Higher Education Act of
17 1965.”.

18 (d) EVALUATION.—The Secretary of Education shall
19 establish a system for the evaluation of the 21st Century
20 Scholars Program established pursuant to the amend-
21 ments made by this section. Such evaluation shall include
22 measurements of the impact of the Program on Pell Grant
23 participation by low-income individuals, the educational
24 attainment of 21st Century Scholars as compared to con-
25 trol groups, and any change in social behavior such as

- 1 teenage pregnancy, drop-out rates, and juvenile detention
- 2 and incarceration rates.

