

HCS HB 1473 -- ACCESS MISSOURI SCHOLARSHIP

SPONSOR: Kingery (Thomson)

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "do pass" by the Committee on Higher Education by a vote of 12 to 0.

This substitute revises the grade required for renewing an Access Missouri Scholarship from a 2.5 grade point average (GPA) on a four-point scale to maintaining satisfactory academic progress for those scholarship recipients who have less than 60 semester hours, while retaining the 2.5 GPA for those with 60 semester hours or more. Satisfactory academic progress is to be defined by the institution of attendance but cannot be lower than a 2.0 on a four-point scale. The substitute clarifies that the required GPA for the renewal of other assistance programs will continue to be 2.5. In order to award the additional scholarships as a result of the revised GPA requirement, award amounts will be refigured within the annual appropriation amount.

The substitute contains an emergency clause.

FISCAL NOTE: No impact on state funds in FY 2011, FY 2012, and FY 2013.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that the Access Missouri Scholarship is a needs-based award, not a merit award, and many students struggle their first year in college but eventually achieve a good grade point average. The current renewal standard is especially hard on students who are the first in their families to attend college and those who are taking academically challenging classes.

Testifying for the bill were Representatives Thomson and Brown (149); Department of Higher Education; St. Louis Community College; University of Missouri; Missouri State University; Braxton Rethwisch, Central Methodist University; Independent Colleges and Universities of Missouri; Associated Students of the University of Missouri; Charles Mayfair, Missouri Valley College; and Truman State University.

OPPONENTS: There was no opposition voiced to the committee.

OTHERS: Others testifying on the bill say that although it has not yet voted on a position on the bill when the hearing was held, its chief officers individually support it.

Testifying on the bill was Missouri Community College Association.