

CCS HCS SCS SB 733 -- HIGHER EDUCATION

This bill changes the laws regarding the Higher Education Academic Scholarship Program, commonly known as the Bright Flight Scholarship Program; the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program; and higher education research technology transfer.

BRIGHT FLIGHT SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Eligibility for a Bright Flight scholarship is expanded to include a Missouri resident who has received a General Education Development (GED) diploma or who has completed a homeschooling program, secondary coursework through a virtual public school, or other academic instruction program that satisfies the compulsory school attendance law. A student's qualifying score for the scholarship will be determined at the beginning of his or her last year of secondary coursework. Currently, a student scoring in the top 4% and 5% of Missouri ACT or SAT test-takers receives an annual \$1,000 award. The bill clarifies that all students in the top 3% will receive their awards of up to \$3,000 per year before any student in the top fourth or fifth percentiles receives an award of up to \$1,000 per year.

Currently, a student is allowed to receive a renewal scholarship for three years. The bill allows a student's scholarship to be renewed for as long as he or she is in compliance with the program's renewal requirements. If a scholarship recipient cannot attend an approved institution because of military service in any branch of the Armed Forces of the United States, the student will be offered the scholarship if he or she returns to full-time status within six months after ending the military service and verifying to the Coordinating Board for Higher Education within the Department of Higher Education that the service was satisfactorily completed.

ACCESS MISSOURI FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Currently, a student at a public four-year institution, including Linn State Technical College, receives a maximum financial assistance award of \$2,150 and a student at a private institution receives a maximum of \$4,600 from the Access Missouri Financial Assistance Program. Beginning with the 2014-2015 academic year, the bill combines the categories for these schools into one with a \$2,850 maximum and a \$1,500 minimum award and increases the maximum award for a community college from \$1,000 to \$1,300.

The bill also repeals the expiration date of the program and specifies that any provisions regarding a termination date will not apply to the program.

HIGHER EDUCATION RESEARCH TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

The bill specifies that an entity in which an institution of higher education holds an ownership or membership interest will not be deemed to be a public governmental or quasi-public governmental body as it relates to the Open Meetings and Records Law, commonly known as the Sunshine Law, if the entity is engaged primarily in activities involving commercialization of the skills or knowledge of the institution's faculty or of the institution's research, research capabilities, intellectual property, technology, or technological resources and the institution maintains as an open record an annual report, available no later than October 1, identifying specified information. Meetings, records, and votes may be closed to the extent that they relate to records or information submitted in connection with a proposal or agreement to license intellectual property or perform sponsored research involving students, faculty, or staff or to promote or pursue economic development and which contain sales projections or other business plans, financial information, or trade secrets of which the disclosure may endanger the competitiveness of a business.

The bill contains an emergency clause for the provisions regarding higher education research technology transfer.