
A BILL FOR AN ACT

RELATING TO THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII PROMISE PROGRAM.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF HAWAII:

1 SECTION 1. The legislature finds that the University of
2 Hawaii's Hawaii graduation initiative is a systemwide strategic
3 initiative endorsed by the board of regents with a goal to
4 increase the educational capital of the State by increasing
5 students' educational participation in and completion of a
6 postsecondary education, particularly for Native Hawaiians, low-
7 income students, and those from underserved regions and
8 populations, and preparing them for success in the workforce and
9 their communities.

10 The legislature further finds that an educated labor force
11 and engaged citizenry are essential in today's global,
12 knowledge-based economy. Across the nation, states have set
13 ambitious goals to boost college completion rates. Hawaii's own
14 "55 by '25" campaign goal focuses on increasing the percentage
15 of working-age adults with two- or four-year degrees to
16 fifty-five per cent by 2025. According to the most recent data
17 available, forty-three per cent of Hawaii's working age adults



1 currently have a postsecondary degree. As the State's sole
2 system of public higher education, the University of Hawaii is
3 committed to doing its part to close the State's projected
4 educational attainment gap.

5 In April 2016, the Institute for Research on Higher
6 Education at the University of Pennsylvania graduate school of
7 education issued a study that analyzed college costs in relation
8 to family income level. The study revealed that higher
9 education has gone from expensive to unaffordable for most low-
10 and middle-income families. According to this same study,
11 Hawaii ranked third in the nation for overall college
12 affordability, and the University of Hawaii community colleges
13 are the most affordable public two-year institutions in the
14 nation.

15 The report further acknowledged that despite Hawaii's
16 commendable overall college affordability ranking, attending
17 college is a big expense for families earning less than \$30,000
18 annually; Hawaii's financial aid policies are not fully able to
19 alleviate costs for these families; and the State provides
20 minimal need-based aid to students attending public
21 institutions. Since this report, the University of Hawaii has



1 implemented the Hawaii community college promise program, which
2 is a need-based award intended to be applied toward the unmet
3 direct cost needs of qualified students enrolled at any
4 community college campus of the University of Hawaii. Awards
5 are contingent upon funding and amounts are determined by the
6 individual students' Free Application for Federal Student Aid
7 information.

8 Financial aid through federal Pell Grants; University of
9 Hawaii and private scholarships; the Servicemen's Readjustment
10 Act of 1944, as amended, otherwise known as the "GI Bill," for
11 service members and veterans; and employers covers much of the
12 cost for need-based students. However, cost is still a barrier
13 for certain need-based students, especially for those who do not
14 qualify for the Hawaii community college promise program because
15 they are enrolled at one of the University of Hawaii's four-year
16 campuses.

17 The purpose of this Act is to:

18 (1) Expand the Hawaii community college promise program to
19 provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs
20 of qualified undergraduate students enrolled at a
21 four-year campus of the University of Hawaii; and



1 (2) Provide an appropriation to establish and implement
2 the expanded program.

3 SECTION 2. Section 304A-506, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended to read as follows:

5 " ~~[+] §304A-506 [.]~~ Hawaii ~~[community college]~~ promise
6 program; established. (a) Notwithstanding section 304A-501,
7 there is established the Hawaii ~~[community college]~~ promise
8 program to be administered by the board of regents. The program
9 shall provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of
10 qualified students enrolled at any ~~[community college]~~ campus of
11 the University of Hawaii.

12 (b) A student enrolled at a community college campus shall
13 be eligible for scholarship consideration for a maximum of eight
14 semesters if the student:

- 15 (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition;
- 16 (2) Completes and submits the Free Application for Federal
17 Student Aid for each academic year and accepts all
18 federal and state aid, grants, scholarships, and other
19 funding sources that do not require repayment;
- 20 (3) Is enrolled in a classified degree or certificate
21 program with six or more credits per semester;



- 1 (4) Maintains satisfactory academic progress, as defined
2 by federal requirements established pursuant to Title
3 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended,
4 and determined by the campus at which the student is
5 enrolled; and
- 6 (5) Has been determined by the campus to have unmet direct
7 cost needs.
- 8 (c) A student enrolled in an undergraduate program at a
9 University of Hawaii campus, other than a community college
10 campus, shall be eligible for scholarship consideration for a
11 maximum of eight semesters if the student:
- 12 (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition;
13 (2) Completes and submits the Free Application for Federal
14 Student Aid for each academic year and accepts all
15 federal and state aid, grants, scholarships, and other
16 funding sources that do not require repayment;
- 17 (3) Is enrolled in a classified degree or certificate
18 program with twelve or more credits per semester;
- 19 (4) Maintains satisfactory academic progress, as defined
20 by federal requirements established pursuant to Title
21 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended,



1 and determined by the campus at which the student is
2 enrolled; and

3 (5) Has been determined by the campus to have unmet direct
4 cost needs.

5 ~~[(e)]~~ (d) Scholarships shall be awarded to the extent
6 possible based on available funds and on a greatest need basis.
7 An award granted to a student shall be equal to the student's
8 unmet direct cost need, based on the Free Application for
9 Federal Student Aid calculation of need, less the amounts
10 available to the student from Pell grants and other
11 scholarships.

12 ~~[(d)]~~ (e) To maintain a scholarship under this section~~[-~~
13 a] :

14 (1) A student enrolled at a community college shall meet
15 the requirements of subsection (b) (4) [-]; and

16 (2) A student enrolled in an undergraduate program at a
17 University of Hawaii campus, other than a community
18 college campus, shall meet the requirements of
19 subsection (c) (4).

20 ~~[(e)]~~ (f) As used in this section, "direct cost" means any
21 cost directly related to a student's education, including



1 tuition; educational fees; and the costs of books, supplies, and
2 transportation between the student's dwelling and the student's
3 campus."

4 SECTION 3. Section 304A-2102, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
5 amended to read as follows:

6 "[+] §304A-2102 [+] Hawaii [~~community college~~] promise
7 program subaccount. (a) There is established the Hawaii
8 [~~community college~~] promise program subaccount within the
9 University of Hawaii general fund. Moneys in the subaccount
10 shall be used to provide financial assistance to qualified
11 students through Hawaii [~~community college~~] promise program
12 scholarships under section 304A-506.

13 (b) The University of Hawaii shall submit a report to the
14 legislature no later than twenty days prior to the convening of
15 each regular session regarding the subaccount. The report shall
16 include but not be limited to the number of scholarships
17 provided under the Hawaii [~~community college~~] promise program
18 during the preceding year.

19 (c) This subaccount is not intended to provide loans or
20 keep track of payback provisions."



1 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
 2 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
 3 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2020-2021 for
 4 the expansion of the Hawaii promise program pursuant to this
 5 Act, including the provision of scholarships.

6 The sum appropriated shall be expended by the University of
 7 Hawaii for the purposes of this Act.

8 SECTION 5. Statutory material to be repealed is bracketed
 9 and stricken. New statutory material is underscored.

10 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on July 1, 2020.

11

INTRODUCED BY:

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JAN 21 2020



H.B. NO. 2255

Report Title:

UH; Hawaii Promise Program; Scholarships; Four-year UH Campus; Appropriation

Description:

Expands the Hawaii community college promise program to provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of qualified students at any four-year University of Hawaii campus who meet certain eligibility criteria. Appropriates funds for the program.

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