
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 and therefore an issue of statewide
13 concern. Across the nation, states have set ambitious goals to
14 boost college completion rates. Hawaii's own 55 by '25 campaign
15 goal focuses on increasing the percentage of working-age adults
16 with two- or four-year degrees to fifty-five per cent by 2025.
17 According to the most recent data available, forty-four per cent



1 of Hawaii's working-age adults currently have a postsecondary
2 degree. As the State's sole system of public higher education,
3 the University of Hawaii is committed to doing its part to close
4 the State's projected 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 promise program, which is a need-based
2 award intended to be applied toward the unmet direct cost needs
3 of qualified students enrolled at any community college campus
4 of the University of Hawaii. Awards are contingent upon
5 funding, and amounts are determined by the individual students'
6 Free Application for Federal Student Aid information.

7 Financial aid through federal Pell Grants, University of
8 Hawaii and private scholarships, the GI Bill for service members
9 and veterans, and employers covers much of the cost for need-
10 based students. However, cost is still a barrier for certain
11 need-based students, especially for those who do not qualify for
12 the Hawaii promise program because they are enrolled at one of
13 the University of Hawaii's four-year campuses.

14 The purpose of this Act is to:

- 15 (1) Expand the Hawaii promise program to provide
16 scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of
17 qualified undergraduate students enrolled at a four-
18 year campus of the University of Hawaii; and
19 (2) Provide an appropriation to establish and implement
20 the expanded program.



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

3 "[+]§304A-506[+] Hawaii [~~community college~~] **promise**
4 **program; established.** (a) Notwithstanding section 304A-501,
5 there is established the Hawaii [~~community college~~] promise
6 program to be administered by the board of regents. The program
7 shall provide scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of
8 qualified students enrolled at any [~~community college~~] campus of
9 the University of Hawaii.

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

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



1 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended,
2 and determined by the campus at which the student is
3 enrolled; and

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

6 (c) A student enrolled in an undergraduate program at a
7 University of Hawaii campus, other than a community college
8 campus, shall be eligible for scholarship consideration for a
9 maximum of eight semesters if the student:

- 10 (1) Qualifies for Hawaii resident tuition;
- 11 (2) Completes and submits the Free Application for Federal
12 Student Aid for each academic year and accepts all
13 federal and state aid, grants, scholarships, and other
14 funding sources that do not require repayment;
- 15 (3) Is enrolled in a classified degree or certificate
16 program with twelve or more credits per semester;
- 17 (4) Maintains satisfactory academic progress, as defined
18 by federal requirements established pursuant to Title
19 IV of the Higher Education Act of 1965, as amended,
20 and determined by the campus at which the student is
21 enrolled; and



1 (5) Has been determined by the campus to have unmet direct
2 cost needs; provided that a student enrolled in a
3 certificate program shall not be required to submit a
4 FAFSA application each academic year.

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, a
13 student enrolled at a community college shall meet the
14 requirements of subsection (b) (4) [~~r~~] and a student enrolled in
15 an undergraduate program at a University of Hawaii campus, other
16 than a community college campus, shall meet the requirements of
17 subsection (c) (4).

18 [~~e~~] (f) As used in this section, "direct cost" means any
19 cost directly related to a student's education, including
20 tuition; educational fees; and the costs of books, supplies, and



1 transportation between the student's dwelling and the student's
2 campus."

3 SECTION 3. Section 304A-2102, Hawaii Revised Statutes, is
4 amended by amending its title and subsections (a) and (b) to
5 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 SECTION 4. There is appropriated out of the general
20 revenues of the State of Hawaii the sum of \$ or so
21 much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal year 2023-2024 and



1 the same sum or so much thereof as may be necessary for fiscal
2 year 2024-2025 for the establishment and implementation of the
3 Hawaii promise program pursuant to this Act, including the
4 provision of scholarships.

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

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

9 SECTION 6. This Act shall take effect on June 30, 3000.

10



Report Title:

University of Hawaii Promise Program; Scholarships; Four-year
University of Hawaii Campus; Appropriation

Description:

Provides scholarships for the unmet direct cost needs of
qualified students at any four-year University of Hawaii campus
who meet certain eligibility criteria. Makes an appropriation
for the Hawaii promise program. Effective 6/30/3000.

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not legislation or evidence of legislative intent.*

