

SENATE HIGHER EDUCATION COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

SENATE, No. 1885

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MARCH 14, 2022

The Senate Higher Education Committee reports favorably Senate Bill No. 1885.

This bill repeals N.J.S.18A:71B-6, which requires a student who is subject to the provisions of the federal “Military Selective Service Act,” to provide verification of compliance in order to be eligible for State-funded loans, grants, or scholarships. This bill also removes the requirement that students comply with the “Military Selective Service Act” in order to be eligible for scholarships offered under the State’s Law Enforcement Officer Memorial Scholarship Program.

In December 2020, then-President Donald Trump signed the “FAFSA Simplification Act,” Pub.L.116-260, legislation that was authored by then-Senator Lamar Alexander (R-Tennessee) and was overwhelmingly approved by Congress on a bipartisan basis. This federal law eliminates the requirement for male students to register with Selective Service in order to be eligible for federal student financial aid, and removes a question on the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) regarding whether male students have registered with Selective Service. As of academic year 2021-2022, eligibility procedures for federal student financial aid no longer include verification of Selective Service registration.

The majority of New Jersey students apply for State student financial assistance using the FAFSA without having to complete an additional State questionnaire. Because the Selective Service question will no longer be on the FAFSA, otherwise eligible students will be impeded from receiving State student financial aid if current New Jersey State law is left unchanged. To remove this barrier for eligible students to receive State student financial aid, this bill aligns State student financial aid eligibility requirements with federal financial aid eligibility requirements.