

SENATE, No. 591

STATE OF NEW JERSEY 219th LEGISLATURE

PRE-FILED FOR INTRODUCTION IN THE 2020 SESSION

Sponsored by:

Senator JAMES BEACH

District 6 (Burlington and Camden)

Senator KRISTIN M. CORRADO

District 40 (Bergen, Essex, Morris and Passaic)

SYNOPSIS

Establishes Gold Star Family Scholarship Program; appropriates \$100,000 from General Fund to Higher Education Student Assistance Authority.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

Introduced Pending Technical Review by Legislative Counsel.



1 **AN ACT** establishing a scholarship program for certain family
2 members of military personnel who died while on active duty,
3 supplementing chapter 71B of Title 18A of the New Jersey
4 Statutes and chapter 9 of Title 54A of the New Jersey Statues,
5 amending P.L.1999, c.192, and making an appropriation.

6
7 **BE IT ENACTED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
8 *of New Jersey:*

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10 1. (New section) As used in this act:
11 “Gold Star Family member” means a spouse, domestic partner,
12 civil union partner, parent, brother, sister, child, legal guardian, or
13 other legal custodian, whether of the whole blood or the half blood,
14 or by adoption, of a member of the Armed Forces of the United
15 States or the National Guard who lost his life while on active duty
16 for the United States;

17 “Institution of higher education” means an institution of higher
18 education licensed by the appropriate agency or department and
19 accredited or preaccredited by a nationally recognized accrediting
20 association. An institution of higher education shall also include
21 certain proprietary institutions, but only for degree granting
22 programs approved by the Secretary of Higher Education or other
23 institutions as determined by the Higher Education Student
24 Assistance Authority.

25
26 2. (New section) There is established in the Higher Education
27 Student Assistance Authority a non-lapsing fund that shall be
28 known as the Gold Star Family Scholarship Fund. The fund shall
29 consist of: all funds appropriated by the Legislature for inclusion in
30 the fund; contributions made by taxpayers pursuant to section 4 of
31 P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill);
32 receipts from the personalized license plate surcharge established
33 pursuant to section 1 of P.L.1999, c.192 (C.39:3-33a); contributions
34 made to the fund by private sources; and investment earnings of the
35 fund. The Director of the Division of Investment in the Department
36 of the Treasury shall invest and reinvest the money in the fund.

37
38 3. (New section) a. Beginning in the first full academic year
39 following the enactment of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the
40 Legislature as this bill), the authority is authorized to award
41 scholarships from the fund for the costs of undergraduate study at
42 an institution of higher education to Gold Star Family members.
43 The authority shall:

44 (1) establish criteria for the determination of eligibility for a
45 scholarship; and

EXPLANATION – Matter enclosed in bold-faced brackets [thus] in the above bill is not enacted and is intended to be omitted in the law.

Matter underlined thus is new matter.

(2) establish procedures for determining the amount of each scholarship award based on the cost of attendance at the institution of higher education and other federal and State financial assistance for which the scholarship recipient is eligible.

b. An individual scholarship award shall not exceed the average tuition charged by the four-year public institutions of higher education in the State.

4. (New section) a. Each taxpayer shall have the opportunity to indicate on the taxpayer's New Jersey gross income tax return that a portion of the taxpayer's tax refund or an enclosed contribution shall be deposited in the Gold Star Family Scholarship Fund established pursuant to section 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).

b. Any costs incurred by the Division of Taxation for collection or administration attributable to this section may be deducted from the receipts collected pursuant to this section, as determined by the Director of the Division of Budget and Accounting. The State Treasurer shall deposit the net contributions into the Gold Star Family Scholarship Fund.

5. Section 1 of P.L.1999, c.192 (C.39:3-33a) is amended to read as follows:

1. a. Whenever the **【Division of】** New Jersey Motor **【Vehicles】** Vehicle Commission is authorized to charge an additional application fee for the issuance of a personalized, courtesy or special license plate, the **【division】** commission shall charge that additional application fee only upon the initial issuance of the plate. If a personalized, courtesy or special plate is issued to a lessee in a motor vehicle leasing agreement, upon termination of the lease the lessee may apply to the **【director】** chief administrator to have the plate reissued to another motor vehicle leased or owned by the lessee upon payment of a fee of \$4.50. If a personalized, courtesy or special license plate is issued to an owner of a motor vehicle, the owner may apply to the **【director】** chief administrator to have the plate reissued to another motor vehicle leased or owned by the owner upon payment of a fee of \$4.50. Nothing in this section shall be construed as prohibiting the **【division】** commission from charging, at the time of annual registration renewal, the payment of the additional fee which has been required under any other section of law for a special license plate.

b. The annual registration renewal of a motor vehicle that has been issued a personalized license plate shall include in each year subsequent to the issuance of the personalized license place a fee in the amount of \$2, which shall be in addition to the fee for the renewal of the registration renewal, and shall be deposited in the

1 Gold Star Family Scholarship Fund established pursuant to section
2 2 of P.L. , c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill).
3 (cf: P.L.1999, c.192, s.1)
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5 6. There is appropriated from the General Fund to the Higher
6 Education Student Assistance Authority the sum of \$100,000 to be
7 credited to the Gold Star Family Scholarship Fund to effectuate the
8 provisions of this act.
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10 7. Sections 1 through 3 and section 6 of this act shall take
11 effect immediately, section 4 of this act shall take effect in the first
12 full tax year following enactment, and section 5 of this act shall
13 take effect 90 days following enactment.
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16 STATEMENT
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18 This bill establishes the Gold Star Family Scholarship Program in
19 the Higher Education Student Assistance Authority (HESAA). Under
20 the program, a spouse, child, parent, guardian, or sibling of an
21 individual who served in the Armed Forces of the United States or
22 National Guard and lost his life while on active duty would be eligible
23 to receive a scholarship to attend an institution of higher education.
24 HESAA would be responsible for establishing eligibility criteria, and
25 determining the amount of each scholarship award after considering
26 the cost of attendance at the institution of higher education and other
27 federal and State assistance for which the individual is eligible. An
28 individual scholarship award may not exceed the average tuition
29 charged at the four-year public institutions of higher education in the
30 State.

31 HESAA will award scholarships using money in the Gold Star
32 Family Scholarship Fund created under the bill. The bill establishes an
33 annual \$2 surcharge on personalized license plates, the proceeds of
34 which will be deposited into the fund. It also provides for a
35 designation on the State gross income tax return that permits a
36 taxpayer to make voluntary contributions to the fund. Last, the bill
37 appropriates \$100,000 to the fund.