

1 SENATE BILL 68

2 57TH LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2025

3 INTRODUCED BY

4 Harold Pope and Cristina Parajón

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10 AN ACT

11 RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; AMENDING THE GRADUATE SCHOLARSHIP
12 ACT; UPDATING DEFINITIONS; CHANGING CRITERIA FOR ELIGIBILITY
13 AND CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY; REMOVING THE REQUIREMENT THAT A
14 RECIPIENT BE A UNITED STATES CITIZEN OR HAVE A PERMANENT
15 RESIDENT VISA; LOWERING THE ENROLLMENT REQUIREMENT TO PROVIDE
16 THAT A RECIPIENT BE ENROLLED IN AT LEAST SIX CREDIT HOURS;
17 INCLUDING A REQUIREMENT THAT A RECIPIENT HAVE A BACHELOR'S
18 DEGREE AND MAINTAIN A GRADE POINT AVERAGE OF 3.0 OR HIGHER OR
19 HOLD A PAID POSITION SUPPORTING FACULTY; INCREASING THE AMOUNT
20 OF AN AWARD IN AN AMOUNT NOT TO EXCEED ONE HUNDRED PERCENT OF
21 TUITION AND FEES FOR AN ACADEMIC YEAR; MAKING CONFORMING
22 AMENDMENTS.

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24 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF NEW MEXICO:

25 SECTION 1. Section 21-21G-3 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,

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1 Chapter 111, Section 3, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "21-21G-3. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Graduate
3 Scholarship Act:

4 A. "academic year" means [~~any~~] the consecutive
5 period of two semesters [~~three quarters~~] or other comparable
6 units commencing with the fall term each year;

7 B. "award recipient" means a New Mexico resident
8 student awarded a graduate scholarship;

9 C. "department" means the higher education
10 department;

11 D. "eligible institution" means [~~any~~] a graduate-
12 degree-granting state university in New Mexico accredited by
13 the [~~north central association of colleges and secondary~~
14 ~~schools~~] higher learning commission;

15 E. "graduate [~~and professional~~] field" means [~~any~~]
16 a program of study intended to result in a master's or doctoral
17 degree, excluding [~~the degree in medicine~~] a doctor of
18 medicine; and

19 F. "groups underrepresented in graduate education"
20 means women, minorities, persons with a visual impairment or
21 other physical disability and other groups [~~who~~] that have
22 traditionally been underrepresented in the specific area of
23 graduate study or profession for which the scholarship is
24 awarded."

25 SECTION 2. Section 21-21G-5 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
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1 Chapter 111, Section 5, as amended) is amended to read:

2 "21-21G-5. CONDITIONS FOR FIRST-YEAR ELIGIBILITY.--

3 Priority ~~[will]~~ shall be given to ~~[New Mexico students from~~
4 ~~those groups with the most severe underrepresentation and]~~
5 students who are New Mexico residents with the greatest
6 financial need and students from groups underrepresented in
7 graduate education. A scholarship may be awarded to ~~[an~~
8 ~~individual]~~ a New Mexico resident who:

9 A. ~~[is a citizen of the United States or who has a~~
10 ~~permanent resident visa]~~ has earned a bachelor's degree and
11 maintained a grade point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0
12 scale or who holds a paid position supporting faculty teaching
13 or research activities;

14 B. has met the admission requirements, ~~[and]~~ is
15 accepted for enrollment ~~[as a full-time student in an~~
16 ~~underrepresented]~~ and enrolls in at least six credit hours in a
17 graduate [or professional] field of study [as determined by the
18 institution]; and

19 C. has complied with all the rules ~~[and~~
20 ~~regulations]~~ adopted by the ~~[commission]~~ department for award
21 of the scholarship and the provisions regarding the
22 administration of ~~[state]~~ the graduate ~~[scholarships adopted~~
23 ~~pursuant to the Graduate Scholarship Act; and~~

24 D. ~~agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~
25 ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~

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1 ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~
2 ~~hours per week during the academic year]~~ scholarship program."

3 SECTION 3. Section 21-21G-6 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
4 Chapter 111, Section 6, as amended) is amended to read:

5 "21-21G-6. CONDITIONS FOR CONTINUING ELIGIBILITY.--

6 A. Except as provided in Subsection B of this
7 section, a scholarship may be reawarded to a student who:

8 [~~A.~~] (1) has been an award recipient of a New
9 Mexico graduate scholarship the previous year;

10 [~~B.~~] (2) maintains a grade point average of
11 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale and remains in good academic
12 standing as determined by the institution; and

13 [~~C.~~] (3) is enrolled [~~as a full-time graduate~~
14 ~~student as determined by the institution;~~

15 ~~D. is pursuing the second year of a master's degree~~
16 ~~or the second or third year of a doctoral degree; and~~

17 ~~E. agrees to serve in an unpaid internship or~~
18 ~~assistantship at the eligible institution, a government agency~~
19 ~~or private industry approved by his major department for ten~~
20 ~~hours per week during the academic year]~~ in at least six credit
21 hours in a graduate field of study.

22 B. A graduate scholarship may be granted until the
23 award recipient either receives a terminal degree or has
24 qualified and received eight semesters of scholarship,
25 whichever occurs first."

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1 SECTION 4. Section 21-21G-7 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
2 Chapter 111, Section 7, as amended) is amended to read:

3 "21-21G-7. AMOUNT OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--Scholarship [~~awards~~
4 ~~shall be for seven thousand two hundred dollars (\$7,200) per~~
5 ~~year to be disbursed in equal installments over the period of~~
6 ~~an academic year]~~ award amounts shall not exceed one hundred
7 percent of tuition and fees for the graduate program at the
8 eligible institution for the academic year; provided that the
9 department shall fund only one semester at a time and shall not
10 fund the second semester of the academic year if the student
11 does not enroll for that semester or does not maintain
12 eligibility."

13 SECTION 5. Section 21-21G-10 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 1988,
14 Chapter 111, Section 10, as amended) is amended to read:

15 "21-21G-10. TERMINATION OF SCHOLARSHIPS.--A scholarship
16 is terminated upon the occurrence of:

17 A. withdrawal from the eligible institution by the
18 award recipient or failure to reenroll for consecutive academic
19 years or [~~failure to be a full-time graduate student; or~~] the
20 second semester of an academic year;

21 B. failure to maintain the required grade point
22 average and other qualifications for the scholarship; or

23 [~~B.~~] C. substantial noncompliance by the award
24 recipient with the Graduate Scholarship Act or the rules
25 [~~regulations~~] or procedures promulgated by the [~~commission~~]

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