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SENATE BILL 420

**53RD LEGISLATURE - STATE OF NEW MEXICO - FIRST SESSION, 2017**

INTRODUCED BY

William P. Soules

AN ACT

RELATING TO HIGHER EDUCATION; PROVIDING A SIXTEEN-MONTH GRACE PERIOD FOR STUDENTS TO QUALIFY FOR A LEGISLATIVE LOTTERY TUITION SCHOLARSHIP.

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

**SECTION 1.** Section 21-21N-2 NMSA 1978 (being Laws 2014, Chapter 80, Section 2, as amended) is amended to read:

"21-21N-2. DEFINITIONS.--As used in the Legislative Lottery Tuition Scholarship Act:

A. "community college" means a branch community college of a four-year state educational institution, a two-year state educational institution or a community college or technical and vocational institute established pursuant to Chapter 21, Article 13 or 16 NMSA 1978, respectively;

B. "comprehensive institution" means eastern

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1 New Mexico university, western New Mexico university,  
2 New Mexico highlands university or northern New Mexico college;

3 C. "department" means the higher education  
4 department;

5 D. "full time" means fifteen or more credit hours  
6 each semester of the regular academic year in state educational  
7 institutions and twelve or more credit hours each semester of  
8 the regular academic year in community colleges or for legacy  
9 students in any program semester;

10 E. "fund" means the lottery tuition fund;

11 F. "legacy student" means a full-time resident  
12 student who has received for three or more program semesters by  
13 the end of fiscal year 2014 the legislative lottery scholarship  
14 awarded pursuant to the former provisions of Sections 21-1-4.3,  
15 21-13-10 and 21-16-10.1 NMSA 1978 prior to the enactment of the  
16 Legislative Lottery Tuition Scholarship Act;

17 G. "program semesters" means those semesters for  
18 which a legacy or qualified student may receive a tuition  
19 scholarship and excludes the first semester of attendance at a  
20 public post-secondary educational institution;

21 H. "public post-secondary educational institution"  
22 means a four-year state educational institution or a community  
23 college;

24 I. "qualified student" means a full-time student  
25 who graduated from a public or accredited private New Mexico

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1 high school or who received a high school equivalency  
2 credential while maintaining residency in New Mexico and who:

3 (1) either:

4 (a) ~~[immediately upon]~~ within sixteen  
5 months of graduation or receipt of a high school equivalency  
6 credential, was accepted for entrance to and attended a public  
7 post-secondary educational institution; or

8 (b) within ~~[one hundred twenty days of~~  
9 ~~completion of a high school curriculum]~~ four months of  
10 graduation or receipt of a high school equivalency credential,  
11 began service in the United States armed forces and within ~~[one~~  
12 ~~year]~~ sixteen months of completion of honorable service or  
13 medical discharge from the service, attended a public post-  
14 secondary educational institution; and

15 (2) successfully completed the first semester  
16 at a public post-secondary educational institution with a grade  
17 point average of 2.5 or higher on a 4.0 scale during the first  
18 semester of full-time enrollment;

19 J. "research institution" means the university of  
20 New Mexico, New Mexico state university or New Mexico institute  
21 of mining and technology;

22 K. "state educational institution" means an  
23 institution of higher education enumerated in Article 12,  
24 Section 11 of the constitution of New Mexico; and

25 L. "tuition scholarship" means the scholarship that

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1 provides tuition assistance per program semester for a  
2 qualified student or legacy student attending a public  
3 post-secondary educational institution."

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