

Legislative Analysis



TUITION ASSISTANCE ELIGIBILITY

Phone: (517) 373-8080
<http://www.house.mi.gov/hfa>

House Bill 5175 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Amos O'Neal

Analysis available at
<http://www.legislature.mi.gov>

House Bill 5176 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Jimmie Wilson, Jr.

House Bill 5177 as introduced
Sponsor: Rep. Kara Hope

Committee: Higher Education
Complete to 10-24-23

SUMMARY:

House Bills 5175, 5176, and 5177 would amend different acts that govern college tuition assistance programs to allow individuals who have been convicted of felonies or are incarcerated to be eligible for those respective programs. All of the programs created by the acts these bills would amend were overseen by the Michigan Higher Education Assistance Authority, which became the Michigan Finance Authority (MFA) under Executive Order 2010-2,¹ and each act would also be amended to also reflect this reorganization.

House Bill 5175 would amend the Children of Veterans Tuition Grant Act to remove a prohibition on an individual who was convicted of a felony involving an assault, physical injury, or death being eligible for a grant under the program created in the act.

MCL 390.1342 and 390.1344

House Bill 5176 would amend 1964 PA 208, which provides for competitive scholarships based on academic standards, to remove a prohibition on an incarcerated individual being eligible for the award of a first-year scholarship.

MCL 390.972 and 390.974

House Bill 5177 would amend 1966 PA 313, which provides for tuition grants for students enrolled in Michigan's independent nonprofit college and universities, to remove a prohibition on incarcerated individuals being eligible for aid under the program.

MCL 390.992 and 390.993

¹ <http://legislature.mi.gov/doc.aspx?mcl-12-194>

FISCAL IMPACT:

House Bill 5175 would increase costs by a slight yet indeterminate amount due to elimination of the felony restriction on the Children of Veterans Tuition Grant program. For FY 2021-22, the most recent year with full data, 404 students were awarded program funding. While the number of potential students who would become newly eligible with the proposed change is not known, student estimates would be on the lower end of the spectrum. As an example, 20 additional students would result in a program cost of approximately \$56,000, which would be within the program's current appropriation levels. Children of Veterans Tuition Grants have a \$2,800 award level for FY 2023-24.

House Bill 5176 would increase costs for the Michigan Competitive Scholarship by an indeterminate amount. With the elimination of the incarceration restriction, more potential students would have access to the Michigan Competitive Scholarship program if they met all other program requirements and were enrolled in an eligible higher education degree program. Due to the nature of the variables involved, it is difficult to estimate the number of incarcerated individuals who meet the scholarship requirement and would enroll in a higher education program. Competitive Scholarships have a \$1,500 award level for FY 2023-24.

House Bill 5177 would increase costs for the Tuition Grant program by an indeterminate amount. More potential students would be eligible for the Tuition Grant program with the elimination of the incarceration restriction. However, those students would also have to meet all other program requirements and be enrolled in an eligible independent higher education degree program. Due to the nature of the variables involved, it is difficult to estimate the number of incarcerated individuals who meet the scholarship requirement and would enroll in a higher education program. Tuition Grants have a \$3,000 award level for FY 2023-24.

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■ This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan House Fiscal Agency staff for use by House members in their deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.