

SENATE BILL NO. 146—COMMITTEE ON EDUCATION

(ON BEHALF OF THE COMMITTEE TO CONDUCT  
A STUDY CONCERNING THE COST AND  
AFFORDABILITY OF HIGHER EDUCATION)

FEBRUARY 12, 2019

Referred to Committee on Education

SUMMARY—Revises the eligibility requirements for the Silver State Opportunity Grant. (BDR 34-385)

FISCAL NOTE: Effect on Local Government: No.  
Effect on the State: Yes.

~

EXPLANATION – Matter in *bolded italics* is new; matter between brackets ~~omitted material~~ is material to be omitted.

AN ACT relating to education; revising provisions relating to the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program; changing the credit hour requirement for eligibility in the Program; requiring the Board of Regents of the University of Nevada to adopt certain regulations; requiring the Board of Regents to include additional information in its biennial report on the Program to the Legislature; and providing other matters properly relating thereto.

**Legislative Counsel's Digest:**

Under existing law, the Silver State Opportunity Grant Program awards grants to certain students who attend a community college or state college within the Nevada System of Higher Education. Existing law provides that in order to receive a grant, a student must be enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, in at least 15 credit hours during a semester at a community college or state college. (NRS 396.952) Under existing law, the Board of Regents must adopt regulations relating to the Program. (NRS 396.956) Existing law also requires the Board of Regents to submit a biennial report to the Legislature on the Program. (NRS 396.960)

**Section 1** of this bill changes the credit hour requirement to require that a student be enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, in at least 30 credit hours during an academic year. **Section 1** also provides an exception to the credit hour requirement for a student who is in the final year of a program of study. **Section 2** of this bill requires the Board of Regents to determine the amount of money available for all grants during any academic year, rather than during any semester. **Section 3** of this bill requires the Board of Regents to adopt further regulations that: (1) require a student who applies for a grant to complete an academic plan with a community



college or state college to ensure the student can enroll in the required number of credit hours; (2) allow a student in the final year of their program of study and who needs less than the required number of credit hours to complete the program of study to request an exception to the credit requirement; and (3) authorize a community college or state college to establish a methodology for awarding grants based on the student population and credit load at the community college or state college. **Section 4** of this bill requires the Board of Regents to include credit load data indicating how students met the required number of credit hours each academic year in its biennial report to the Legislature.

---

THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF NEVADA, REPRESENTED IN  
SENATE AND ASSEMBLY, DO ENACT AS FOLLOWS:

**Section 1.** NRS 396.952 is hereby amended to read as follows:

396.952 1. The Silver State Opportunity Grant Program is hereby created for the purpose of awarding grants to eligible students to pay for a portion of the cost of education at a community college or state college within the System.

2. The Board of Regents shall administer the Program.

3. In administering the Program, the Board of Regents shall for each ~~{semester,}~~ *academic year*, subject to the limits of money available for this purpose, award a grant to each eligible student to pay for a portion of the cost of education at a community college or state college within the System.

4. ~~{To}~~ *Except as otherwise provided in subsection 5, to* be eligible for a grant awarded under the Program, a student must ~~{:}~~ *apply to participate in the program and:*

(a) Be enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, during ~~{a semester in at least 15 credit hours}~~ *an academic year in at least 30 credit hours that are required for his or her program of study* at a community college or state college within the System;

(b) Be enrolled in a program of study leading to a recognized degree or certificate;

(c) Demonstrate proficiency in English and mathematics sufficient for placement into college-level English and mathematics courses pursuant to regulations adopted by the Board of Regents for such placement;

(d) Be a bona fide resident of the State of Nevada for the purposes of determining pursuant to NRS 396.540 whether the student is assessed a tuition charge; and

(e) Complete the Free Application for Federal Student Aid provided for by 20 U.S.C. § 1090.

*5. A student who is enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, in less than 30 credit hours during an academic year is eligible for a grant awarded under the Program if the student is enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, in the final academic year of his or her*



*program of study and submits a request for an exception to the credit hour requirement which complies with the regulations adopted by the Board of Regents pursuant to paragraph (e) of subsection 1 of NRS 396.956 and is approved by the Board of Regents.*

**Sec. 2.** NRS 396.954 is hereby amended to read as follows:

396.954 1. For each eligible student, the Board of Regents or a designee thereof shall:

(a) Calculate the maximum amount of the grant which the student is eligible to receive. The maximum amount of such a grant must not exceed the amount equal to the cost of education of the student minus the amounts determined for the student contribution, family contribution and federal contribution to the cost of education of the student.

(b) Determine the actual amount of the grant which will be awarded to each student, which amount must not exceed the maximum amount calculated pursuant to paragraph (a), but which may be in a lesser amount if the Board of Regents or a designee thereof, as applicable, determines that the amount of money available for all grants for any ~~semester~~ *academic year* is insufficient to award to all eligible students the maximum amount of the grant which each student is eligible to receive.

(c) Award to each eligible student a grant in the amount determined pursuant to paragraph (b).

2. Money received from a grant awarded under the Program must be used by a student only to pay for the cost of education of the student at a community college or state college within the System and not for any other purpose.

**Sec. 3.** NRS 396.956 is hereby amended to read as follows:

396.956 1. The Board of Regents:

(a) Shall adopt regulations prescribing the procedures and standards for determining the eligibility of a student for a grant from the Program.

(b) Shall adopt regulations prescribing the methodology by which the Board of Regents or a designee thereof will calculate:

(1) The cost of education of a student at each community college and state college within the System, which must be consistent with the provisions of 20 U.S.C. § 1087II.

(2) For each student, the amounts of the student contribution, family contribution and federal contribution to the cost of education of the student.

(3) The maximum amount of the grant for which a student is eligible.

(c) Shall adopt regulations prescribing the process by which each student may meet the credit-hour requirement described in



paragraph (a) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952 for eligibility for a grant awarded under the Program.

(d) *Shall adopt regulations requiring eligible students who apply to participate in the Program to complete an academic plan with the community college or state college in which the student is enrolled, or accepted to be enrolled, that ensures the student can enroll in at least the number of credit hours required by paragraph (a) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952.*

(e) *Shall adopt regulations permitting a student to request an exception to the number of credit hours required by paragraph (a) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952 under the academic plan if the student is in his or her final academic year and his or her program of study requires less than the number of credit hours required by paragraph (a) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952 in the final academic year to complete his or her program of study.*

(f) *Shall adopt regulations authorizing a community college and a state college to establish a methodology for awarding grants to students based on the student population and credit load at the community college or state college.*

(g) May adopt any other regulations necessary to carry out the Program.

2. The regulations prescribed pursuant to this section must provide that:

(a) In determining the student contribution to the cost of education, the student contribution must not exceed the amount that the Board of Regents determines the student reasonably could be expected to earn from employment during the time the student is enrolled at a community college or state college within the System, including, without limitation, during breaks between semesters. This paragraph and any regulations adopted pursuant to this section must not be construed to require a student to seek or obtain employment as a condition of eligibility for a grant under the Program.

(b) Determination of the family contribution to the cost of education must be based on the family resources reported in the Free Application for Federal Student Aid submitted by the student ✗ pursuant to paragraph (e) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952.

(c) Determination of the federal contribution to the cost of education must be equal to the total amount that the student and his or her family are expected to receive from the Federal Government as grants.

**Sec. 4.** NRS 396.960 is hereby amended to read as follows:  
396.960 On or before February 1 of each odd-numbered year, the Board of Regents shall submit to the Director of the Legislative Counsel Bureau for transmittal to the next regular session of the



Legislature a written report on the Program which must include, without limitation, information regarding:

1. The number of students during the immediately preceding school year who were awarded grants under the Program.

2. The average amount of each grant awarded under the Program for the immediately preceding school year.

3. *Credit load data indicating how students met the number of credit hours required by paragraph (a) of subsection 4 of NRS 396.952 each academic year.*

4. The success of the Program, including, without limitation, information regarding the percentage of students awarded grants since the creation of the Program who have remained enrolled at a community college or state college within the System and the percentage of students awarded grants since the creation of the Program who have been awarded a degree or certificate.

**Sec. 5.** The provisions of subsection 1 of NRS 218D.380 do not apply to any provision of this act which adds or revises a requirement to submit a report to the Legislature.

**Sec. 6.** This act becomes effective on July 1, 2019.

