

The Florida Senate
BILL ANALYSIS AND FISCAL IMPACT STATEMENT

(This document is based on the provisions contained in the legislation as of the latest date listed below.)

Prepared By: The Professional Staff of the Committee on Education

BILL: SB 680

INTRODUCER: Senator Evers

SUBJECT: Florida Bright Futures Scholarship Program

DATE: March 11, 2013

REVISED: _____

	ANALYST	STAFF DIRECTOR	REFERENCE	ACTION
1.	Harkey	Klebacha	ED	Favorable
2.			AED	
3.			AP	
4.			RC	
5.				
6.				

I. Summary:

SB 680 repeals the requirement for students to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) in order to be eligible for a Bright Futures Scholarship.

The bill takes effect July 1, 2013.

SB 680 amends s. 1009.531, Florida Statutes.

II. Present Situation:

Section 1009.531(7), F.S., requires a student to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FASFA) in order to be eligible for the merit-based Bright Futures Scholarship. The FASFA provides data on student and family income that universities use to determine financial need. The 2011 Legislature added the FASFA requirement as a requirement for Bright Futures Scholarship eligibility.¹

The requirement for the FAFSA was initiated during the 2011-12 academic year and substantially increased the percentage of Bright Futures recipients filing a FAFSA from 70% in 2010-11 to 100% in 2011-12.² University financial aid offices report that the addition of the FAFSA requirement as part of the Bright Futures Scholarship program has resulted in a significant increase in the workload due to the need to process approximately 30,000 additional

¹ Ch. 2011-63, L.O.F.

² Florida Board of Governors staff analysis for SB 680, on file with the Senate Education Committee.

student FAFSA applications in 2011-12 above the historical trend. Verification of information on the FAFSA can add several weeks to the financial aid packaging process.³

According to the Board of Governors (BOG), approximately one-third of FAFSA forms annually received by institutions are randomly selected by the US Department of Education for verification. The federal regulation states that if an institution has reason to believe that an applicant's FAFSA information is inaccurate, it must verify the accuracy of that information.⁴ Thus an increase in the number of FAFSA applications filed increases the workload for these verifications.

III. Effect of Proposed Changes:

SB 680 repeals the requirement for students to submit a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) in order to be eligible for a Bright Futures Scholarship.

IV. Constitutional Issues:

A. Municipality/County Mandates Restrictions:

None.

B. Public Records/Open Meetings Issues:

None.

C. Trust Funds Restrictions:

None.

V. Fiscal Impact Statement:

A. Tax/Fee Issues:

None.

B. Private Sector Impact:

Students and their parents would not have to disclose family financial information in order to be eligible for a Bright Futures Scholarship.

C. Government Sector Impact:

The repeal of the FAFSA requirement would reduce the workload on university financial aid offices.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ ch. 34, s. 668.54), C.F.R.

VI. Technical Deficiencies:

None.

VII. Related Issues:

None.

VIII. Additional Information:

A. Committee Substitute – Statement of Substantial Changes:

(Summarizing differences between the Committee Substitute and the prior version of the bill.)

None.

B. Amendments:

None.

This Senate Bill Analysis does not reflect the intent or official position of the bill's introducer or the Florida Senate.
