



790318

LEGISLATIVE ACTION

Senate

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House

Senator Gaetz moved the following:

1 **Senate Amendment to Amendment (420294) (with title**
2 **amendment)**

3
4 Between lines 413 and 414

5 insert:

6 Section 9. Section 1009.893, Florida Statutes, is amended
7 to read:

8 1009.893 Benacquisto Scholarship ~~Florida National Merit~~
9 ~~Scholar Incentive~~ Program.—

10 (1) As used in this section, the term:

11 (a) "Department" means the Department of Education.



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12 (b) "Scholarship Incentive program" means the Benacquisto
13 Scholarship Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive Program.

14 (2) The Benacquisto Scholarship Florida National Merit
15 Scholar Incentive Program is created to reward any Florida high
16 school graduate who receives recognition as a National Merit
17 Scholar or National Achievement Scholar and who initially
18 enrolls in the 2014-2015 academic year or, later, in a
19 baccalaureate degree program at an eligible Florida public or
20 independent postsecondary educational institution.

21 (3) The department shall administer the scholarship
22 incentive program according to rules and procedures established
23 by the State Board of Education. The department shall advertise
24 the availability of the scholarship incentive program and notify
25 students, teachers, parents, certified school counselors, and
26 principals or other relevant school administrators of the
27 criteria.

28 (4) In order to be eligible for an award under the
29 scholarship incentive program, a student must:

30 (a) Be a state resident as determined in s. 1009.40 and
31 rules of the State Board of Education;

32 (b) Earn a standard Florida high school diploma or its
33 equivalent pursuant to s. 1002.3105, s. 1003.4281, s. 1003.4282,
34 or s. 1003.435 unless:

35 1. The student completes a home education program according
36 to s. 1002.41; or

37 2. The student earns a high school diploma from a non-
38 Florida school while living with a parent who is on military or
39 public service assignment out of this state;

40 (c) Be accepted by and enroll in a Florida public or



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41 independent postsecondary educational institution that is
42 regionally accredited; and

43 (d) Be enrolled full-time in a baccalaureate degree program
44 at an eligible regionally accredited Florida public or
45 independent postsecondary educational institution during the
46 fall academic term following high school graduation.

47 (5) (a) An eligible student who is a National Merit Scholar
48 or National Achievement Scholar and who attends a Florida public
49 postsecondary educational institution shall receive a
50 scholarship ~~an incentive~~ award equal to the institutional cost
51 of attendance minus the sum of the student's Florida Bright
52 Futures Scholarship and National Merit Scholarship or National
53 Achievement Scholarship.

54 (b) An eligible student who is a National Merit Scholar or
55 National Achievement Scholar and who attends a Florida
56 independent postsecondary educational institution shall receive
57 a scholarship ~~an incentive~~ award equal to the highest cost of
58 attendance at a Florida public university, as reported by the
59 Board of Governors of the State University System, minus the sum
60 of the student's Florida Bright Futures Scholarship and National
61 Merit Scholarship or National Achievement Scholarship.

62 (6) (a) To be eligible for a renewal award, a student must
63 earn all credits for which he or she was enrolled and maintain a
64 3.0 or higher grade point average.

65 (b) A student may receive the scholarship ~~incentive~~ award
66 for a maximum of 100 percent of the number of credit hours
67 required to complete a baccalaureate degree program, or until
68 completion of a baccalaureate degree program, whichever comes
69 first.



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70 (7) The department shall annually issue awards from the
71 scholarship incentive program. Before the registration period
72 each semester, the department shall transmit payment for each
73 award to the president or director of the postsecondary
74 educational institution, or his or her representative, except
75 that the department may withhold payment if the receiving
76 institution fails to report or to make refunds to the department
77 as required in this section.

78 (a) Each institution shall certify to the department the
79 eligibility status of each student to receive a disbursement
80 within 30 days before the end of its regular registration
81 period, inclusive of a drop and add period. An institution is
82 not required to reevaluate the student eligibility after the end
83 of the drop and add period.

84 (b) An institution that receives funds from the scholarship
85 incentive program must certify to the department the amount of
86 funds disbursed to each student and remit to the department any
87 undisbursed advances within 60 days after the end of regular
88 registration.

89 (c) If funds appropriated are not adequate to provide the
90 maximum allowable award to each eligible student, awards must be
91 prorated using the same percentage reduction.

92 (8) Funds from any award within the scholarship incentive
93 program may not be used to pay for remedial coursework or
94 developmental education.

95 (9) A student may use an award for a summer term if funds
96 are available and appropriated by the Legislature.

97 (10) The department shall allocate funds to the appropriate
98 institutions and collect and maintain data regarding the



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99 scholarship incentive program within the student financial
100 assistance database as specified in s. 1009.94.

101 (11) Section 1009.40(4) does not apply to awards issued
102 under this section.

103 (12) A student who receives an award under the scholarship
104 program shall be known as a Benacquisto Scholar.

105 (13) All eligible Florida public or independent
106 postsecondary educational institutions are encouraged to become,
107 and all eligible state universities shall become, college
108 sponsors of the National Merit Scholarship Program.

109 (14)~~(12)~~ The State Board of Education shall adopt rules
110 necessary to administer this section.

111
112 ===== T I T L E A M E N D M E N T =====

113 And the title is amended as follows:

114 Delete line 1585

115 and insert:

116 requirement; amending s. 1009.893, F.S.; changing the
117 name of the "Florida National Merit Scholar Incentive
118 Program" to the "Benacquisto Scholarship Program";
119 providing that a student who receives a scholarship
120 award under the program will be referred to as a
121 Benacquisto Scholar; encouraging all eligible Florida
122 public or independent postsecondary educational
123 institutions, and requiring all eligible state
124 universities, to become college sponsors of the
125 National Merit Scholarship Program; amending s.
126 1011.62, F.S.; creating a